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Makoni, Brightman

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Controlled Existence in Zimbabwe and Beyond: Exploring Survivability in *Shadows* (2012) by Novuyo Rosa Tshuma and *The Border Jumper* (2019) by Christopher Mlalazi

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Critical Diversity Studies by Coursework and Research Report

By

Brightman Makoni – 2367766

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

15 February 2022

Name of Supervisor: Dr Josiah Nyanda

Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own, original work, in design and execution, and all the reference materials contained herein have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts by Research and Coursework at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other institution.

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Brightman Makoni



Signed on the 15th of February 2022

Dedication

I dedicate this research project to my family to whom I am deeply indebted for their profound support, patience and love.

Abstract

This study considers existence and survivability as the particulars of transnational migration. Through critical engagement with Novuyo Rosa Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012) and Christopher Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019), the research explores migrant lives in the context of transborder migration between Zimbabwe and South Africa. The chosen literary texts are analysed through the prism of typified migrant characters' lives in Zimbabwe, South Africa and on the margins of both and on the borderlines, between societies and countries. Insights are drawn from the theory of Intersectionality entwined with concepts of oppression, identity and habitus. The unified theoretical framework is applied on migrant characters' trend of existing and surviving and how the trends expose power dynamics that play out in one's mother country and beyond borders as a consequence of identity fluidity, place, space and time.

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This piece of work may not be complete and meaningful without utmost recognition of Jehovah, The Most High, whose mercies and graces I may not be able to satisfactorily honour: "*That in everything ye are enriched by him: 1 Corinthians 1:5*"

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Chapter One: Introduction to the Study

1.1 Introduction

This research is premised on existence and survivability in the face of transborder migration. It explores migrant lives in Zimbabwe and beyond its borders in Novuyo Rosa Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012) and Christopher Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019). The study pursues a broadened understanding of existence and survivability in the context of what Magdalena Pfalzgraf (2022: 3) describes as "the age of the wandering Zimbabwean". The intention is to offer a critical analysis of chosen literary texts through the prism of typified migrant experiences in Zimbabwe, South Africa and on the margins of and borderlines between both societies and countries. Thus, the study takes into account the prevalence of migration in the contemporary world and how it stands as "a complex (and turbulent) process requiring a consideration of both structural factors and human agency" (Elizabeth Easthope, 2009: 62).

The study considers migrant lives in the context of "crossing borders" and "transcending boundaries" (Pfalzgraf, 2022, subtitle) as preoccupations for both Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019). It interrogates characters' endeavour to cushion individual well-being following "Zimbabwe's degeneration into unprecedented socio-economic and political crisis ... [where] migration [is taken] as a survival strategy" (Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012: 322). Hence, the precariousness at home makes relocation to South Africa an alternative and a possible way out.

The research's holistic approach to transborder migration as captured by Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019), therefore, takes cognizance of the idea that both spaces – migrant characters' place of origin and the intended destination – are informed by constraints that shape their existence and survival strategies. Focus on the lives of characters in the context of transborder migration is driven by the motive to unmask power relations manifesting in characters' inhabitancy and navigation of different local and foreign spaces represented in the two texts. These power dynamics, one might argue, expose the systems of domination associated with migrant lives in the homeland and hostland.

The research examines identity and subjectivity and how they relate to migrant characters' existence and survivability in the selected texts. Attention is given to the transmutation of identity and subjectivity where migrant characters "are faced with the 'freedom and burden' of designing their own identity" (Daniel Williams & Norman McIntyre, 2001: 397). The

enterprise is to expose the fluidity of identity and subjectivity in post-modern society as a result of migrant characters' encounter with distinct places, spaces, time and context. The study casts a glance at the psychosocial dimension as a constituent of migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe. The endeavour, in this regard, is to explore migrant characters as individuals whose mode of existing and surviving in local and foreign spaces are informed by psychic and social aspects.

Novuyo Rosa Tshuma is a Zimbabwean female writer and professor of creative writing. *Shadows*, published in 2013 by Kwela Books in South Africa, is her first collection – a novella and selected short stories. Her second book and debut novel, *House of Stone*, was published in the United States of America by Norton in 2019. Christopher Mlalazi is a renowned Zimbabwean novelist, playwright and poet. He is the author of the short story collection *Dancing with Life: Tales from the Township* (2008), for which he was awarded the Best First Book prize in the National Arts Merit Awards in Zimbabwe. He also authored the novels *Many Rivers* (2009), *Running With Mother* (2012) and *They are Coming* (2014). *The Border Jumper* (2019) is a republished version of Mlalazi's debut novel *Many Rivers* (2009) under Xarra Books in South Africa. Both Tshuma and Mlalazi are regarded as post–2000 Zimbabwean writers.

1.2 Rationale/Justification for the Study

Migration as a phenomenon, an experience and a way of life is on the increase in our times. It is, undoubtedly, a chief characteristic feature and the modifier of contemporary societies. This research draws attention to notions of existence and survivability in the context of Zimbabwean migration into South Africa. It attempts to canvass the daily experiences of migrant characters in Novuyo Rosa Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012) and Christopher Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019) to understand how they fare at home and beyond borders. By focusing on migrant characters' mode of existing and surviving in the motherland, during movement and after arrival in the hostland, the research provides a sustained insight into manifest injustices and systems of domination and their impact on individual migrant lives in the two texts. The objective is to uncover how migrant characters respond to challenges in spaces that threaten their daily existence and make survivability uncertain.

As the contemporary world maintains its dynamism, identities and subjectivities cannot be static. They are constructed and negotiated through individuals' interaction with diverse spaces, cultures and times. Migration, therefore, is characterised by change and adaptation.

This study proposes a nuanced (re)conceptualisation of identity and subjectivity to examine how migrant characters are moved and engaged by multiple identities and subjectivities which they negotiate in different local and foreign spaces represented by Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019). Thus, the research seeks to examine that which lurks behind the 'transnational migrant' as an individual.

Migrant characters in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* appear to have limited control over the spaces in which they find themselves both in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Characters' behaviour or manner of being in the face of migration is conditioned by the mental state (the psyche) and what happens in the social world in which they find themselves (the social). Therefore, the study critically analyses the psychosocial dimension to expose how it constitutes the existence and survivability of migrant characters in the selected texts. In exploring existence and survivability in the selected texts, I seek to accomplish the following goals:

1.3 Goals/Objectives of the Study

In particular, the research project is limited to three major points of focus. The first is a (re)conceptualisation of transnational movement as an enmeshment of forces. The motive of such an enterprise is to set the stage for a systematic reading of Zimbabwean migration into South Africa as characterised by a host of challenges which migrant characters contend with at home, during their movement to South Africa and upon arrival in the hostland. Such an investigation is intended to go against the grain of bland reading or understanding of Zimbabwean out-migration. The second major point is related to the first and it concerns transnational identities and subjectivities. A close reading of the selected texts will demonstrate how migrant characters are moved and engaged by different identities and subjectivities attached to context, place, space and time. The third major point of focus borrows from, and is very much related to, the two points of focus mentioned above. Significantly, I draw attention to the representation of the psychosocial dimension and how it drives migrant characters' existence and survivability both at home and beyond borders.

The specific objectives may be expressed thus:

- To explore how the selected texts open new vistas that enable conceptualisation of migration as a web of intersecting forces.
- To examine the manner in which the selected texts problematize the understanding of identities and subjectivities in the context of migration.

- To interrogate how the selected texts portray the psychosocial dimension as a constituent of migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe.

These research objectives inform the following questions guiding the study:

1.4 The Research Questions

Main Question: How do the selected texts portray migrant existence and survivability in and beyond Zimbabwe?

Sub Questions:

- How do the selected texts open new vistas that enable conceptualisation of migration as a web of intersecting forces?
- In what manner do the selected texts problematize the understanding of identities and subjectivities in the context of migration?
- How do the selected texts depict the psychosocial dimension as a constituent of migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe?

1.5 Literature Review

The research explores existence and survivability in the face of transborder migration in *Shadows* (2012) and *The Border Jumper* (2019). The objective is to expose power dynamics that play out in one's mother country and beyond borders as a consequence of identity fluidity, time and space. According to Sebastian K. Boell and Dubravka Cecez-Kecmanovic (2014), a literature review serves as a compass to show one's previous position and their preferred direction in any given research. Thus, a good literature review establishes the research study into its historical and methodological context. Zenzele Lungile Weda (2012) concurs and observes that a literature study allows the researcher to identify the lacuna which the study will occupy and to map clearly the gap of knowledge that the research seeks to fill. While there exist a hive of research on Zimbabwean migration into South Africa, it appears that few studies have paid attention to how migrant lives are moved and shaped by intricate power dynamics. Therefore, the present research endeavours to contribute to literature on transborder migration from a power dynamics perspective. I intend, through reviewing selected existing literature, to situate the research into the wider discourse on transnational migration as well as a framework of relevant theory and methodology. The literature review falls into two sections. The first section is a review of literature relevant to the topic under study, and the second section offers a review of literature on the primary texts, that is,

Shadows (2012) and *The Border Jumper* (2019). Due to a dearth of research on the primary texts, reviewed literature will also include informal critical writing published on the internet. The topic is somewhat dense, hence, it is divided into subsections. These subsections are substantiated to demonstrate how each idea corresponds and informs the subject under study.

1.5.1 Review of literature relevant to the proposed study

1.5.1.1 Transborder migration and migrant policing

SaraJane Renfroe (2018) explores the lives of undocumented Latina migrants from an intersectional viewpoint in the context of United States. She looks at how gender, nationality and migration status concurrently impact on Latina migrant women whose experiences are moved and shaped by being women, Latin and undocumented. Intersectionality, as it is employed in the study, allows the reader to understand how gender, nationality and migration status are constitutive and essentially co-construct each other in the daily experiences of migrant women in question. The three notions, in this respect, stand as oppressive systems whereupon Latina migrant women are patronised and brought down to subhuman levels, and further deprived of basic liberal rights. The study shows the continued inflow of undocumented Latina migrant women workers in the United States notwithstanding the toxicity and unaccommodating environment cushioned by migrant policing.

Renfroe (2018) further observes that through criminalizing one's status as undocumented, the American migrant policy relegates undocumented migrants to an extremely vulnerable position, where they have highly limited access to the American society and social institutions like education, jobs and healthcare. The author illuminates the imposition of identity and how such a process of identity construction is informed by lopsided power relations. This brings to mind Michel Foucault's (1978) discourse on identity, which seeks to construct the self, the person and attended identity as the subject. This helps to underline the "manufactured" divisive element between the United States society, standing as the "definers" from a dominant standpoint and undocumented Latina migrant women as the "defined" precariously located on the fringes. This idea is complemented by Carol Anne Davids who represents the hierarchisation of human population in the United States in her race-centred novel *The Blacks of Cape Town* (2013). The text demonstrates how Zara, the South African Colored, is forced to confirm her 'blackness' as a postdoctoral fellow at University of Berwick in New Jersey. Davids (2013) foregrounds racial dynamics in America

through Zara, and how the American society homogenizes people falling outside whiteness as 'people of color', as if white is not a color.

Migrant policing in America, as Renfroe (2018) enlightens, brings about the aspect of naming which is, by and large, undergirded by unequal power relations – he who has the power defines. She explains the negative effects of deportability where Latina migrant women's lives are brought into stasis. The author shows the pervasive nature of migrant illegality where undocumented Latina migrant women lead constrained lives. While the study is instrumental in showcasing the prevalence of migrant labour in the postmodern world, it focuses on one gender, that is, women at the expense of men. The present study seeks to extend the scope to include males in an attempt to offer a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of migration from a gender and power dynamics perspective.

Elsewhere, Johannes Machinya (2016) highlights Zimbabwean migrants' illegality in South Africa, and how their undocumented status exposes them to exploitation as migrant labour in Witbank. He lucidly observes that the oppressive everyday governmentality of undocumented Zimbabwean migrant workers, who are perceived as illegal, renders them economically and politically precarious where they live under constant fear of deportation. This act of one's fear and reluctance to return to their homeland evokes Josiah Nyanda and Luck Makuyana's (2020) research on Zimbabwean migrants' fear of going back home following the obsolescence of their 'Special Dispensation Permits' in South Africa towards the end of 2017. Both Machinya (2016) and Renfroe (2018) (discussed earlier) extensively underscore migrant policing. Apparently, one can draw parallels between South Africa and the United States in terms of their respective ways of responding to, and dealing with, transborder migration. It can be argued that the two countries are both guided by restrictive (im) migration policies.

Machinya (2016) explains that the threat of deportation limits the freedom of undocumented Zimbabwean migrant workers as home and place of work are understandably the 'only' spaces they can occupy with 'limited' ease. This lack of freedom is associated with what Jerome Waldron (2016), in his conceptualisation of the homeless in America, describes as 'the lack of liberal-negative freedom'. Undocumented Zimbabwean migrant workers are deprived of this kind of freedom and segregated from the wider South African society as Machinya (2016) notes. It is apparent, in this regard, that the undocumented status dispossesses undocumented migrant workers of their sense of being and belonging. It appears

that they lead ‘chartered lives’ in a hostland where their existence is surveilled and survival constrained.

Machinya (2016) sheds light on collaboration between immigration officials at South Africa’s border posts and South African Police Service (SAPS) who grant undocumented migrants entry into the country where their freedom is limited. He brings to the fore the detriment characterising the lives of participants in his study who pointed out the unforgiving corruption by the South African police whom they had to pay bribes, thus, leading to commodification of their stay. The underlying drive here is that the undocumented migrant workforce exists on borrowed time. This study positively takes the reader through the nature of Zimbabwean migrant lives beyond borders. Nevertheless, the study does not consider migrant lives in their motherland. A place that elsewhere has been described as a house of hunger (Dambudzo Marechera, 1978) and a geographical mistake where you go back to die after living your life somewhere else (Charles Mungoshi, 1975). There is, however, need to have a complete cycle of migrant existence and survivability in the homeland and hostland. Therefore, the present study seeks to offer a nuanced understanding of migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe. It provides a critical analysis of the selected texts to expose how migrant lives are conditioned by interweaving power dynamics both in local and foreign spaces.

1.5.1.2 Gender and Oppression

Closely linked to transborder migration and migrant policing are gender and oppression, and their relatability to intersectionality. Laura Marie Clark (2017) examines intersectionality in the context of the vulnerability of irregular (undocumented) migrant women to sexual assault at the United States and Mexico border. She demonstrates the prevalence of sexual assault meted against irregular migrant women upon their arrival to and from the border and borderlands dividing the two nations. The study draws on intersectionality framework to interrogate the experiences of undocumented migrant women whom the author contends have been overlooked in research on migration. Clark (2017) proposes that a gender-specific perspective merits a place in migration research as it enables researchers to unmask different experiences between genders. Her argument, in this respect, directs the reader to the feminisation of migration where women constitute human mobility in the postmodern world, hence their experiences of migration deserve attention. She points out that the lives of irregular migrants at the United States and Mexico border are negatively impacted by their criminalized status, gender and a militarised culture in response to migration. Implied here is

the power imbalance where women are subject to the patriarchal force that pervades migrant policing, gender harm and the use of military surveillance. The military culture explains why then United States president, Donald Trump, was pushing towards the erection of walled borders between America and its neighbours, especially Mexico. There are intricacies surrounding migration as a phenomenon, an experience and a way of life which must not be taken at superficial levels. The study signposts how an intersectional lens allows researchers to unravel the manner in which the experiences of women are inflected by gender norms and subtle transcripts of unequal power relations.

Clark (2017) established that the thread of violence that irregular migrant women face explains their constant susceptibility to sexual assault and sexual violence at the United States and Mexico border. She reveals that irregular migrant women fall victims to kidnapping and/ or abduction, human trafficking and rape – abuses that are perpetrated by border patrol officials, local police and criminals. This, in effect, is testimony to a myriad of violent systems that are simultaneously at play in the existence and survival of irregular migrant women concerned. There is a pointer to the prevalence of oppression and domination where there are institutional constraints upon self-development, and institutional constraints upon self-determination directed against undocumented migrant women (Iris Marion Young, 1990). The sexual assault of women indicates the systemic violence and military nature of the American society where migration is unmitigatedly policed. Clark (2017) concludes that the sexual assault of irregular migrant women at the United States and Mexico border and borderlands includes a variety of actors, opinions and power constructions. The study crucially depicts women's migration experiences from an intersectional viewpoint. The present study seeks to complement this approach by focusing on existence and survival in the face of transborder migration. It offers a comprehensive literary survey of the selected texts to examine migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe.

1.5.1.3 Identity Construction

Related to gender and oppression is the notion of identity construction. Hazel Easthope (2009) explores the relationship between mobility and place in the process of identity construction among Australian migrants. She presents the concept of mobility as central to social life. The author assesses the complex interplay between the three theoretical frameworks – socio-historical approach, theories in sociology and theories in geography – through which she evaluates the impact of mobility and place on identity. The study

demonstrates that the socio-historical approach shows transition from place-based identities to mobile identities; theories in sociology view identity as mobile, dynamic, hybrid and relational; and theories in geography pay attention to the nexus between place, space and identity. By so doing, the study brings to light the complexity of identity because of its fluidity.

Easthope's (2009) study is driven by a desire to understand the extent to which spatial, social and temporal movement of individuals and issues to do with goods, money and ideas influence identity construction, and whether our identities are increasingly dislocated. She provides an answer to her question through return migration where the study examines a group of adults' experiences of leaving and returning to the Australian town of Tasmania. The study contends that both mobility and place are central to identity formation where the self is oriented towards the cosmos (abstract and mediated experience) and the heath (localness and direct experience). Easthope's (2009) study on young Tasmanians' experiences of migration demonstrates that place and mobility are integral attributes of all identities. As the findings of the research show, other participants conceded to have felt like an outsider after returning to Tasmania following a short period away; others attested to have yearned for home when they were away, but felt dissatisfied upon their return; others expressed how their own achieved identities, conditioned by leaving Tasmania, were challenged upon their return as a result of community's preconceptions of their identities and this explains how identities are attached to power relations; and some participants stressed to have found their home in Tasmania more beautiful than before and this is indicative of how one's sense of place can change over time. Easthope (2009), in this sense, gestures at return migration and making sense of one's identity as espoused in the ideas of Marcus Garvey's (1887 – 1940) return to Africa dream and movement, Aime Cesaire's epic poem "Notebook of a Return to the Native Land" (1947), and Ngugi WaThiong'o's (1972) *Homecoming: Essays on African and Caribbean Literature, Culture and Politics.* These works resonate with, and serve to substantiate, Easthope's (2009) conceptualisation of the fluidity of identity through the depiction of Tasmanians' resolve to return home after migrating.

The study by Easthope (2009) creates and maintains an understanding of fluxity in the conceptualisation of identities and subjectivities. Discernible is that identities and subjectivities are undergirded by (re)construction, choice and negotiation, and most importantly, identities and subjectivities are conditioned by affect. The study shows how our existence as human beings is informed by plural identities that simultaneously impact on our

experiences. The research concludes that any approach to understanding the concept of identity construction and the power relations that move and shape the process must consider the importance and intersection of mobility and place. Easthope (2009) positively demonstrates how mobility complicates our understanding of identities and subjectivities in the postmodern world where migration is prevalent. The present research seeks to contribute to this literature on identity and subjectivity through critical analysis of the selected texts. It demonstrates that mobility not only perpetuates identity fluidity, but also that migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe are moved and engaged simultaneously by multiple identities and subjectivities dependent on place, space and time.

1.5.1.4 Displacement and Survival

Corresponding to identity construction in the context of migration are issues to do with displacement and survival. Zenzele Lungile Weda (2012) examines the factors behind the migration of teachers from Zimbabwe into South Africa, and how these factors function within what he describes as a grounded theory of teacher migration. He notes that the movement of teachers from the homeland to the hostland can be understood in the context of labour migration which, as he argues, continues to transform demographics of the workforce globally. The study signposts teacher migration as a product of globalisation where economies worldwide are integrated to allow the movement of goods, capital, ideas and labour. It demonstrates the prevalence of labour migration in the postmodern world and how it can be understood as the most restricted form of migration. Weda (2012) locates teacher migration in the historical context of Zimbabwe's three waves of migration that began soon after the country's attainment of independence in 1980. As the findings of the study demonstrate, teachers migrated from Zimbabwe to South Africa to attain and maintain what is perceived as a standard-of-living class (Daryl Glaser, 2015). This encapsulates "good" living and working conditions as well as social prestige. As Weda (2012) shows, these teachers were pursuing a certain ideal. The ideal was threatened in Zimbabwe and their existence and survival forced into jeopardy. This explains the nature of poverty and pitiful conditions which confronted teachers and other civil servants during the period of Zimbabwe's downturn between 2007 and 2009 where their ideal status was threatened.

Weda (2012) explains that it was through escaping (migrating) to South Africa that seemed to provide a viable panacea for teachers in their endeavour to improve their diminished status in Zimbabwe. This is reminiscent of 'a lost home' where the atmosphere was characterised by

'uncertainty of hope' (Valerie Tagwira, 2006), with individual lives trailing along 'rotten rows' (Petina Gappah, 2016). Some participants in Weda's (2012) study chronicled a continuation of their misery in the hostland (South Africa) as they failed to get decent jobs that matched the kind of education that they hold. Thus, their lives remained in the category of further diminished status and this shows that their existence and survival remained in stasis. The study explains that other participants conceded to have managed to pull things together and these fall into the ideal status surpassed category. They managed to turn around their fortunes to the betterment of their modes of existing and surviving. This study is crucial in serving the reader with an account of migrant teachers' everyday experiences in Zimbabwe and South Africa. In some respects, the study astrides the homeland and hostland and this is illuminant of migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe. This resonates with the present research's purpose to expose, from a literary lens, the power dynamics that play out in one's mother country and beyond borders as a consequence of identity fluidity, place, space and time. It focuses on migrant existence and survivability in local and foreign spaces through critical engagement with the selected texts.

1.5.1.5 Belonging and Change

Associated with displacement and survival in the context of transborder migration are issues to do with belonging and change. Aghogho Akpome (2019) employs the palimpsest as a literary device to (re)conceptualize home and belonging in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* (2013). He suggests that the experiences of transnational postcolonial migrants has turned to be a central focus to emerging African novels that thematise transborder migration using various postmodernist narrative techniques. Akpome's (2019) point of view, one might argue, appears to be open-ended and prone to challenge. Transborder migration is not a new concept in African novels, and this has been recorded before in Zimbabwean literature, for instance, and hence, understood as historical recurrence. To explicate on this, Thabisani Ndlovu (2010) posits that Zimbabwean out-migration cannot be taken as a phenomenon exclusively birthed by the country's economic meltdown. He explains that Mujubheki, the character in Charles Mungoshi's [Chi]Shona novel *Makunun'unu Maodzamoyo* (1970), set in the late 1960's and early 1970s, testifies to the idea that migration has been part of Zimbabweans before and during the discovery of gold in Johannesburg. Ndlovu (2010) remarks that Mujubheki's name means 'The one who has been to Johannesburg'. A similar observation is made by Alois Mlambo (2010) in his exploration of the history of Zimbabwean migration to the period up to 1990, as well as Reason Beremauro

(2013) who draws the reader's attention to the idioms and expressions in Zimbabwe which are testament to the existence of migratory ties between Zimbabwe and South Africa dating back to colonial times. This, in effect, demonstrates historical recurrence encapsulated in postmodern literary fiction referred to by Akpome (2019).

The study further shows that the literary palimpsest can be perceived as one of such textual tools that allow writers a platform for simultaneous representation of national referents across time and space. Crucially, the study seems to emphasize the impact of mobility in understanding our positionalities. Akpome (2019) observes that Bulawayo's (2013) text encapsulates autobiographical symbolism where parallels can be drawn between Bulawayo herself and Darling, the protagonist of the story, who is born in an unnamed African country that resembles Zimbabwe in every aspect before migrating to the United States. The research shows that Darling is portrayed as a hybrid character where the narrative offers factual history about Zimbabwean socio-political and economic crisis and Operation Murambatsvina (clean-up trash) of 2005, as well as Darling's experiences as an undocumented migrant character in the United States. The author shows that the interplay between factual history and Bulawayo's (2013) imaginative narrative can then be read as intersecting layers of the fluid experiences, places as well as subjectivities in the negotiation of diasporic home and belonging. This is reminiscent of what Sisonke Msimang explains in *Always Another Country* (2017), her memoir for home and exile, as the 'conjunctive nature' of belonging.

Akpome (2019) concludes that Darling's unwavering sense of the nation regarding homeland and the hostland is indicative of the continuing salience of national identity and culture to diasporic (un)belonging in a manner that seemingly belie unprecedented globalisation and cosmopolitanism. This idea of cosmopolitanism is captured in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) through Changez, the protagonist, represented as a cosmopolitan subject whose understanding of himself as a Pakistani 'changes' due to his movements and residence between countries like Philippines, Chile and the United States. Here, there is a pointer to identities and subjectivities that are conditioned by mobility. This arrows to Easthope's (2009) study reviewed earlier in the discussion who brings to light the importance of both mobility and place in conceptualising identity. These studies show the effect of migration on how individuals make sense of themselves and their existence in the world. Akpome (2019) demonstrates the (re)construction of identities and subjectivities which has to do with home and belonging. The present study seeks to build on such an

understanding to expose the complexities of identity construction in the face of transnational migration through a critical analysis of the selected primary texts.

Relatedly, David Chipfupa (2016) explores the notion of travel, migration and what he describes as the redefinition of home in *Harare North* (2009) by Brian Chikwava. He posits that the narrative shows how travelling, migration and spatiotemporal displacement allow the nameless male protagonist-narrator in *Harare North* to reframe and rethink different ideas concerning home and homeland. The study shows the protagonist's endeavour to (re)construct home, land and homeland inorder to create a sense of belonging in an environment punctuated with difficulties in the United Kingdom. The study emphasizes the impact of mobility on individual sense of self in the postmodern world. Mobility, therefore, necessitates our existence in this postmodern compressed world.

Chipfupa (2016) concludes that Chikwava's (2009) text enables the reader to go beyond conceptualising home as a fixed notion to understanding home as perpetually reconstructed through one's interaction with diverse spaces, cultures and times. This feeds into Nyanda and Makuyana's (2020) adoption of the principle of animal migration as a conceptual framework to understand the notion of home, and where home for a black person is, in the context of Zimbabwean transborder migration. The authors propose that home cannot necessarily be where one is born, but rather, where one's life is nurtured can feasibly be perceived as home. These two studies expand the reader's understanding of the impact of migration to people's existence and survival. The aspects of reconstruction and interaction, however, do not imply a smooth process, as they include power relations attending to one's beinghood. To be able to reconstruct you have to interact, and interaction here points to one's relations within a particular environment. Migration, therefore, is a complex phenomenon undergirded by inclusion and exclusion. The present research offers a critical analysis of the selected texts to explore how migrants exist and survive in the process of reconstructing themselves in and beyond Zimbabwe.

1.5.1.6 Intersectionality and Literary Analysis

Corresponding to belonging and change in the context of transnational migration are aspects of intersectionality and literary analysis. Sanne Kalkman (2015) explores power and representation in James Maxwell Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1999). The study is built on an attempt to establish the extent to which *Disgrace* can be read as a feminist text. She describes the text as ambiguous, characterised by various tensions, with varying degrees, to do with the notions

of race, gender and sexuality. The study proposes intersectional feminism as an inclusive perspective from which to disentangle the feminist aspects of the text. It brings into view the nexus between intersectionality and feminist literary criticism which serves to look into power relations inherent in texts and in life, with a focus on breaking them down, taking reading as a political act and to determine the extent of patriarchy. Kalkman (2015) concludes that the text falls short of being wholly considered a feminist text as the representation of (black) female characters such as Soraya and Melanie is secondary, and appears to nurture the development of David Lurie, the male protagonist of the text. The author explains that the text privileges men (male-centred story) and offers lopsided portrayal of women which is a prevalent issue in literature and the media which Coetzee (1999) appears to validate rather than challenge. The study lays the theoretical basis for the present study which seeks to draw on intersectionality theory to critically analyse the various aspects of migration in the selected texts.

Elsewhere, Lina Gildenstern (2020) interrogates the intersectionality between race, gender and migration in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* (2013). She highlights that Ifemelu and Obinze's migration to the United States of America and the United Kingdom respectively, before returning to Nigeria, alters each of their identities. Here, there is a gesture towards return migration which corresponds to Easthope's (2009) study reviewed earlier. This feeds into the present study's enterprise to look into the perceptions, actions and thoughts of migrant characters in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* regarding their circumstances in South Africa and possibilities of a return to Zimbabwe. Gildenstern (2020) points out the need for an intersectional inquiry to analyse how Ifemelu and Obinze, as migrant characters, face different obstacles related to race, gender, class and political views. The author suggests that intersectionality allows the reader to decipher distinct aspects of identity between Ifemelu and Obinze not separately but as overlapping each other. The study insinuates that Ifemelu realizes that she is 'black' after migrating to America and this is reminiscent of Sisonke Msimang's (2017) experiences where she explains in her memoir how she is called an 'African monkey' by a fellow white student in Canada. It is this idea of the manner in which (change of) location impacts on identity that the present study seeks to extrapolate in its critical analysis of migrant characters' identities and subjectivities in the selected texts.

Relatedly, Rosemary Ojone Ajibogwu (2021) interrogates the intersectional discourse in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1992) and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1994). She

adopts intersectionality as a lens to bring into view the processes through which multiple identities interact and evolve over time. The author makes use of the two literary texts to demonstrate how the contextualisation of identity categories such as race, class and gender in literary criticism aids the qualitative understanding of complex relations inherent in different categories of identity. The study explains that Walker (1992) and Morrison (1994) exemplify the fluctuating nature of discourses that frame different identities. This brings into focus the functional nature of discourse, and what Michael Karlberg (2005), following Michel Foucault (1978), signposts as the power of discourse and discourse of power. Discourse, therefore, can be understood as practices that construct an individual. Ojone Ajibogwu (2021) proposes that intersectionality mediates what she explains as the arising tensions between individual's navigation of multiple identities (their reality) and the organised system of thoughts that control identity relationships (discourse).

The study makes the argument that *The Color Purple* and *The Bluest Eye* are illuminant of the underlying tensions that are embedded in identity discourse through the depiction of characters struggling to resolve the conflict of their multiple identities, which results in unstable relationships as manifested between or within identities. The author draws the reader's attention to the importance of conflict in fiction, and how conflict of identities, both within and between identities, conditions Walker (1992) and Morrison's (1994) fictions. She insinuates that the two writers mediate between the ideas of inclusion and difference where they adopt styles that generate multiple responses through processes of parallelism and paradox-building to bring inherent contradictions in discourse to the surface. The present study draws on intersectionality to look at transnational identities and subjectivities as portrayed by the selected texts. It focuses on intersectionality as a key mode of understanding how the multiplicity of migrant identities and subjectivities inform their existence in local and foreign spaces captured by the two chosen authors.

1.5.2 Review of literature on the primary texts

1.5.2.1 Troubled Diasporic Subjects

Not much exists in terms of critical work on Novuyo Rosa Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012) and Christopher Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019). Hence, the present study seeks to offer a literary commentary of these texts to contribute to the debate and discourse on transborder migration. Johan Jacobs (2016) conceptualises 'conversion disorder' in *Shadows* (2012) to show how characters fall victims to the trauma of home and (non) belonging. He shows how

Tshuma (2012) depicts the quandary characterising contemporary Zimbabwean lives and resolve by characters to migrate to the diaspora where their lives are further brought into uncertainty. Strife, it seems, is a chief emblem of migrant lives in the diaspora. The author contends that the novel's story cycle demonstrates individual narratives linked not only with the theme of Zimbabwean diaspora but also by various diasporic tropes. Conversion disorder, as a notion, orients the reader towards what the study posits as troubled diasporic subjects. Of major interest is Jacobs' (2016) endeavour to take the reader through the identity and diasporic nature of Tshuma's (2012) characters in Johannesburg. He sheds light on the idea that Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa raises fundamental questions when it comes to identity and this often stems from the long history of migration in Southern Africa.

Jacobs' (2016) gesturing towards the nature of migration in Southern Africa can be linked to the discovery of diamonds in the 1870s in Kimberley, South Africa, which occasioned transnational migration. This was followed by the discovery of gold in Witwatersrand in 1884, which precipitated the influx of migrants due to huge demands for labour. Sifelani Tsiko (2019) explains that for over 100 years people all over Southern Africa trekked down to South Africa to work under miserable conditions in South Africa's famous diamond and gold mines. This witnessed the setting up of Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, colloquially known as Wenela, in 1901 by gold miners as a recruiting agent for migrant workers from countries around Southern Africa such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana and Mozambique (Minerals Council South Africa, n.d.). Nqobeni Ndlovu (2019) posits that thousands of Zimbabweans migrated to South Africa in the 1970s to provide labour in the diamond and gold mines and they were still waiting for compensation from the mining companies. This explains the provenance of migrant labour in South Africa which took shape in the colonial times when white capital in Britain and South Africa was realised through preying on the labour drawn from several countries in Southern Africa to toil in South Africa's mines (Tsiko, 2019). This brings into view the origins of transborder migration into South Africa which is still prevalent in the postmodern world as Jacobs (2016) documents.

The study demonstrates that there are forces which hinder characters like Mpho, Nomsa and Noma's belonging to Johannesburg, and again, they cannot belong to the homeland as it appears to be an unaccommodating environment. Conversion disorder, therefore, testifies to the purview that characters in the text exist in limbo. This study is instrumental in bringing to light the 'internal selves' of characters in the text in their enterprise to create comfort zones as troubled diasporic subjects. Jacobs (2016) positively depicts the unsettledness and

despondency surrounding migrant characters' lives but he did not do much to show the reader how their (achieved) identities and subjectivities actually play out. The study also falls short in unpacking migrant lives in Zimbabwe before migrating to Johannesburg. The present research seeks to contribute to this gap through a critical analysis of the primary texts. It focuses on the psychosocial dimension to show how characters' existence and survivability at home and beyond are informed by both psychic and social forces. It exposes how place, space and time impact on migrant characters' (re)construction of their identities and subjectivities in spaces that are local and foreign.

1.5.2.2 Return Migration

Memory Chirere (2012) reviews "Shadows", the novella in Tshuma's collection *Shadows* (2012), in which he proposes that Mpho, the protagonist, is depicted as a male figure on a sharp decline having everything in stasis, and where he craves for loneliness. He explains that Mpho is accustomed to marijuana which ushers him into a certain realm where he is able to decipher, almost vividly, the political and spiritual rot characterising his country. The author shows that this is complemented by the desperate poetry and art that Mpho produces, where he communicates death and doom. This gloomy characteristic of Mpho's existence echoes the state of characters in Orlando Patterson's *The Children of Sisyphus* (1964) where Patterson evinces, through Sammy the garbage collector, that the everyday lives of characters in a Jamaican slum are informed by an endless enterprise to survive in the face of what Julia Udofia (2011) describes as an 'uninterrupted shadow of fear and defeat'.

Chirere (2012) goes further to point out that Mpho's leaving of Bulawayo for Johannesburg is not work-oriented but rather an attempt to lure Nomsa, his lover, back to their homeland. He observes that it dawns on Mpho, as much as it does to migrant characters in Mlalazi's *Many Rivers* (2009) (now *The Border Jumper*, 2019) and Chikwava's *Harare North* (2009), that in as much as there is strife in Zimbabwe, there exists nothing to cherish in the diaspora for the loathed Zimbabweans. Chirere's (2012) commentary on Mpho's journey back to Bulawayo, therefore, echoes return migration in the context of what Pfalzgraf (2022) posits as the ideology of the Third Chimurenga disseminated by nationalist media such as *The Patriot*, which peddles an overly negative image of life in the diaspora. This evokes Farayi Mungoshi's (2017) attack on foreign countries and his imploration to Zimbabweans in the diaspora to come back home and fulfil their perceived dreams rather than having empty pursuits. It is in the debate concerning migrant experiences in the hostland and homeland that

the present study locates its focus. It critically analyses the selected texts to expose migrant characters' mode of existing and surviving in and beyond Zimbabwe.

1.5.2.3 Mobility and the transnational African 'Jim'

Pfalzgraf (2022) examines the notion of mobility and the Zimbabwean migrant's capacity for movement in Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019). She situates and analyses the text in the context of what she signposts as the transnational 'African Jim'. The author contends that Mlalazi (2019) employs the formal elements of the classic 'Jim comes to Jo'burg' narrative genre. In this regard, the study explains that 'Jim comes to Jo'burg' came into being as a generic term following the release of Swanson's film *African Jim* (*Jim comes to Jo'burg*) (1949) which is understood as the first feature-length film produced with a black cast for black audiences in South Africa. The study evinces that unlike old classic texts of the Jim comes to Jo'burg genre with a focus on rural-urban migration as evidenced by Toloki, a docile protagonist in Zakes Mda's *Ways of Dying* (1995) who migrates from a rural setting to an unnamed apartheid South African city, Mlalazi (2019) makes use of 'Jim's' familiar storyline but reimagines it in the form of a contemporary transnational urban-urban migration through Qinisela's movement from Bulawayo across the border to Johannesburg.

Pfalzgraf (2022) suggests that *The Border Jumper* (2019) demonstrates fluid movement of Qinisela, a Zimbabwean migrant's ability to cross borders and transcend various boundaries of space, language and identity in the foreign city. She stresses that Qinisela, Mlalazi's (2019) modern-day Jim who differs from his docile predecessors in older texts (such as Toloki in *Ways of Dying* mentioned above), departs from an older genre into a literary work in the post-2000 epoch, where he also 'migrates' from being 'Jim' to becoming a gangster whose life is hinged on Johannesburg's criminal underworld. Whilst the study is crucial in bringing to light the mobility that characterises the Zimbabwean migrant, it focuses only on the protagonist, Qinisela, from the perspective of the 'African Jim' at the exclusion of other characters. It is oriented on movement and offers limited insight into the welfare of migrant characters at home, during migration and upon arrival in the hostland. The present research builds on Pfalzgraf's (2022) demonstration of Qinisela's capacity to transcend boundaries of space, identity and language to examine how these aspects condition the existence and survivability of migrant characters in the selected texts both in the homeland and hostland.

Elsewhere, Thulani Angoma-Mzini (2020) reviews Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019) and observes that Qinisela, the protagonist of the narrative, is driven by the motive to eke a living

in the diaspora after escaping from socio-economic and political shackles taking toll in his homeland. He shows how reality is a rude awakening to Qinisela who understands his plight as a vagrant with nowhere to go or anything to eat. The study depicts how identities and subjectivities are underpinned by positionality where Qinisela tries hard to suppress a sense of being a vagrant and pauper in Johannesburg. It is in this regard that the author shows how Qinisela is adamant to identify and to be identified by others around him as someone existing normally contrary to the reality that he is stranded. Qinisela, then, is perceived having a compromised subjectivity, a notion which explains how identities and subjectivities are moved and shaped by place, space, time and context.

Angoma-Mzini (2020) demonstrates a sense of unsettledness characterising Qinisela's existence beyond borders. He evinces how the world occupied by characters in Mlalazi's (2019) text is torn with disorder where individuals battle for survival. The author brings to light Qinisela's convergence with Hlongwane and Mkhize who negatively identify Qinisela as one of 'Makwerekwere'. The concept of Makwerekwere is informed by the discourse of xenophobia which Angoma-Mzini (2020) traces back from the colonial project of the Berlin Colonial Conference of 1884 where Africa was partitioned into borders. This evokes what Achille Mbembe (2021, YouTube video) explains during a guest lecture on migration as the ordering of space(s) where 'bodies' stand as 'borders'. Angoma-Mzini (2020) describes the discourse of 'Makwerekwere' as the social corruption by South Africans whose hate of other Africans is explained by a thread of xenophobic attacks fashioned against several foreign nationals in their foiled attempt to control transborder migration. The study is crucial in showing the continuous thread of mobility by Zimbabwean individuals whose existence is informed by a battle for survival. Angoma-Mzini (2020), nonetheless, focused on migrant lives in the diaspora. The present research seeks to contribute to this literature by bringing into view the nature of migrant lives in the homeland. It offers a critical commentary of the selected texts to expose power dynamics that play out in migrant characters' daily experiences both in the homeland and hostland.

In sum, this section reviewed existing scholarship on national and transnational migration. The reviewed literature exhibited major themes such as transborder migration and migrant policing; gender and oppression; identity construction; displacement and survival; mobility and change; intersectionality and literary analysis; troubled diasporic subjects; return migration; and mobility and the transnational African 'Jim'. My critical engagement with, and understanding of, these main ideas established the present study into its historical and

methodological context. The discussion demonstrated the prevalence of internal and external migration in the postmodern world and in the process, setting the initial groundwork for the present study. Critical analysis of existing scholarship brought to light theories such as intersectionality and the concepts of oppression and identity which the present research can draw from to build its own theoretical and conceptual framework. This section showed where the current research is coming from and the appropriate direction it is supposed to take. The two sections of the reviewed literature brought to light the niche that this study seeks to fill.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

The previous section focused on reviewing existing scholarship on transborder migration. The discussion brought to light existing theories which the present research can draw from to build its own theoretical framework. In that regard, the reviewed literature evinced the theory of intersectionality as an appropriate analytic tool to address migrant existence and survivability in *Shadows* (2012) and *The Border Jumper* (2019). The reviewed literature brought to the fore oppression and identity as (outstanding) elements on which the current research will build concepts to canvass the systems of domination, identities and subjectivities associated with migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe. Added to these is the concept of habitus which is intended to guide the research in its analysis of migrant characters' state of mind and behaviour in local and foreign spaces. These conceptual frameworks, moreover, intersect.

Intersectionality stands as an academic term propounded by Kimberle Williams Crenshaw, a Black Feminist from the United States, and it went on to be developed by women of color in America. According to Crenshaw, intersectionality can be perceived as one of the viable ways through which women of color "boldly speak back against their theoretical marginality" (2010: 152). She suggests that intersectionality can be adopted to theorise lived experiences. Devon D. Carbado et al. (2013: 303) explain that intersectionality traces its provenance in Black feminism and Critical Race Theory in the United States and it is "a method and a disposition, a heuristic and analytical tool" that researchers can employ. Correspondingly, Patricia Hill-Collins and Valerie Chepp (2013) observe that intersectionality can be used to understand the experiences of others and diverse systems of oppression. Melissa Steyn (2015: 383) proposes that intersectionality plays a pivotal role in illuminating the manner in which "systems of oppression intersect, interlock, co-construct and constitute each other". Intersectionality, therefore, allows this study a platform to expose various lopsided

interrelationships between characters whose daily lives are punctuated with battles to exist and survive in the worlds captured in *Shadows* (2012) and *The Border Jumper* (2019). It draws on intersectionality theory to critically analyse migrant lives in Zimbabwe and in South Africa where they exist as transplants trying to make-ends-meet.

Dina Taha (2019) interrogates the effectiveness of intersectionality in migration and refugee research. She contends that the employment of intersectionality in migration and refugee research is itself a critical framework capable of challenging homogenised experiences and categories in the global refugee context. The underlying drive here is that migration cannot be downgraded to superficial movement of individuals from one place to another. There is need to go beyond thinking about 'people on the move' as a single entity. Intersectionality, one might argue, is a tool capable of dissecting migrant experiences such that we perceive migration as a phenomenon, an experience and a way of life. Taha (2019) observes that intersectionality conditions the analysis of multiple experiences, recognize multiple and fluid identities that are context-dependent, and go further to show how such identities intersect to create disadvantages and privileges for different individuals. Of prime interest here is how intersectionality signposts the interplay between people's diverse identities and multiform experiences, and the manner in which these play out in a person's everyday life. As individuals, our existence is tied to diverse identities that move and engage us, and this brings to mind Amartya Sen's (2006) conceptualisation of identities as plural. It is from these multiple identities that our mode of existence and survival are tied to, thus intersectionality demonstrates the relationality of identity, existence and survival. Individual characters in *Shadows* (2012) and *The Border Jumper* (2019) have multiple experiences and diverse identities as a result of their positionality at home and beyond borders. Vusa in *The Border Jumper*, for instance, cannot merely be understood as an undocumented Zimbabwean migrant in Johannesburg. Through intersectionality, the reader is invited to make sense of identity fluidity where Vusa manifests as a border jumper, an armed criminal, a serial killer, a bogus police officer and a gold dealer. These multiple identities, to borrow Sen's (2006) concept of plural identities, are conditioned by choice and context. Vusa's experiences both in the homeland and hostland are moved and shaped by this idea of identity fluidity.

Clark (2017) employs intersectionality to examine the sexual assault of irregular migrant women at the United States and Mexico border. She explains that the study was fashioned to look at power distinctions, marginalised and illegalised individuals. The author explains that intersectionality stood as a feasible theory to encapsulate diverse moving pieces of her

study's research problem, and it was able to traverse what she explains as borders of identity, of country divisions, and of prescribed illegal statuses. Pellucid here is the idea of migration as an intricate phenomenon, whose nature requires an analytic tool that is capable of understanding intertwined human relations. It is in this case that Tanja Bastia (2014) proposes that migrants have the ability to disrupt borders and to infringe boundaries in diverse ways, something that qualifies them as pertinent subjects for intersectional analysis. The current study, thus, adopts intersectionality to interpret the ways in which characters in Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi's (2019) texts respond to challenges in spaces that threaten their existence and survivability in the face of migration. Clark (2017) proposes that intersectionality is instrumental in one's comprehension of the roots of prejudices and (ab) use of power and it exhorts us into considering power dynamics and their effects. Intersectionality, therefore, appears to be an appropriate theory to guide the present study in its enterprise to unpack power dynamics associated with migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe.

Entwined with intersectionality is Iris Marion Young's (1990) concept of Five Faces of Oppression. She argues that oppression is itself a structural concept which is complemented by domination. One might argue, following Young's (1990) cue, that oppression and domination manifest in individual relationships in society as seen through migrant characters in the selected texts whose lives in the face of migration are apparently constrained. The nameless female protagonist-narrator in "Crossroads", one of the short stories in Tshuma's (2012) collection, for instance, secures a travelling visa at the South African embassy in Zimbabwe under deleterious and capricious conditions. Her migration to Johannesburg is shrouded in overwhelming despondency and she is confronted with a shocking reality upon seeing aunt Mi's living conditions in Johannesburg. "Crossroads" – which demonstrates the intersection of the precarity and uncertainty characterising migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe – portrays the nameless female narrator and aunt Mi as characters pushed to the limits by the oppressive force of poverty demonstrated through their sense of unsettledness. The nameless female protagonist-narrator and Mi's existence and survival in the homeland and hostland are characterised by difficulty.

Young (1990) describes oppression as institutional constraints directed on self-development and sheds light on domination as institutional constraints marshalled towards self-determination. In that regard, oppression can be explained by a family of elements and conditions which Young (1990) usefully identifies as 'five faces of oppression' namely exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. Steyn (2015)

suggests that Young's (1990) conceptualisation of the 'faces' of oppression points to power dynamics that "operate both within nation states and transnationally, an important consideration in the experiences and conditions of migration" (Ibid: 381). Mlalazi (2019) substantiates this point of uprootment where two twin sisters, at the age of fourteen, are smuggled from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg by Disaster, an accomplished human smuggler, who fails to locate their relative and goes on to sexually abuse them for six months in his flat in Johannesburg, before forcing them into the streets with death threats. Disaster here is portrayed as a conduit of oppression as he exploits the two young female characters who are powerless to defend themselves as transplants in South Africa. Young (1990: 42) observes that "all oppressed people suffer inhibition of their ability to develop and exercise their capacities and express their needs, thoughts and feelings – in that abstract sense, all oppressed people face a common condition", a 'nervous condition', to borrow from Tsitsi Dangaremba (1988) and Jean-Paul Satre (1961). The present study draws on Young's (1990) concept of oppression to unmask how migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe are embellished with oppressive systems that manifest the five faces of oppression.

The study further adopts Amartya Sen's (2006) principle of identities as a conceptual framework to leaf through multiple identities and subjectivities that simultaneously move and engage migrant characters in the face of transborder migration. It is employed together with intersectionality theory, the concept (of five faces of) oppression and the concept of habitus. Sen (2006), in his endeavour to make sense of identity, argues that as human beings, there exist "a great variety of categories to which we simultaneously belong" (Ibid: 19). This simultaneity and pluralistic nature of identities is central to the existence and survivability of characters in the texts under study. Qinisela, the protagonist in *The Border Jumper*, is forced by precarious circumstances to masquerade as a Jamaican musician in his attempt to lure Pamela, a prostitute, in agreeing to host him at her place. Qinisela, the Jamaican-turned Zimbabwean, arrives in Johannesburg and subsequently feels that his existence and survival are threatened.

Sen (2006) further observes that membership categories to which individuals simultaneously belong are conditioned by place, space and time. He states that since our identities are robustly plural, individuals will have to make choices regarding "what relative importance to attach, in a particular context", to a certain identity in relation to others (Ibid: 19). Here, Qinisela's identities as a thief and Jamaican reggae musician, therefore, are conditioned by place, space and time. This illustrates how identities intersect and the manner in which they

are conditioned by oppressive forces. Crucially, Sen (2006) stresses that each social context will have a number of identities applicable to it whereupon an individual could assess regarding "their acceptability and relative importance" (Ibid: 19). He brings to light the idea that plural identities that move and engage us as individuals, are prone to constraints. As he understandably demonstrates, "the freedom in choosing our identity in the eyes of others can sometimes be extraordinarily limited" (Ibid: 31). Nomsa in "Shadows", for instance, is constrained to engage in prostitution in the presence of her mother, Holly, and her boyfriend, Mpho, when she is in Bulawayo but she engages in prostitution as a survival gimmick when she migrates to Johannesburg. Transborder migration, in this case, is characterised by change and adaptation. Thus, the concept of simultaneous and plural identities allows the research to explore how identity fluidity is tied to migrant existence and survivability, as well as the attendant factors of place, space, time and the limit of choice in the selected texts.

I also draw on Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus in my attempt to conceptualise the psychosocial dimension in *Shadows* (2012) and *The Border Jumper* (2019). The intention is to critically analyse the interplay between psychic and social aspects in migrant lives both in the homeland and hostland. In substantiating the concept, Bourdieu (1977: 76) states that "habitus is the creation of a continuous interplay of individuals' freewill and the socially-rooted constraints they face". The arrest, incarceration and torture that Mpho in "Shadows", goes through at the hands of the police in Bulawayo after his return from Johannesburg, for instance, brings to light how he is subject to social forces. Mpho's mind and his whole corporeal form are susceptible to pain and control as an accused. This, one might argue, demonstrates the psychic and social effects informing Mpho's mode of existing and surviving, thus his "life is inevitably shaped by […] everyday experiences and realities" (Ibid: 76). Nomsa's sexual abuse by the police, fear and a sense of insecurity in Johannesburg as a migrant character, testify to her "way[s] of acting, feeling and being" (Karl Maton, 2008: 52). Qinisela in *The Border Jumper* (2019) finds himself in an invidious position in Johannesburg following his arrival from Zimbabwe. Hunger transforms him into a potential shoplifter where he tries to steal tinned beef from OK supermarket. It is an activity through which he constantly consults his fear-riddled mind in the face of quandary. Following Bourdieu (1977), the reader is taken through Qinisela's "disposition [which] designates [his] way of being, a habitual state […] and in particular [his] inclination" to steal tinned beef as a survival strategy (Ibid: 214). It can be argued, in this context, that the text demonstrates the complementarity of psychic and social aspects in Qinisela's existence and survivability in

Johannesburg. The study, hence, draws on the concept of habitus to critically analyse the environment instigating characters' thinking, feeling and the manner in which they move in the worlds captured by Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019).

1.7 Research Design & Method

1.7.1 Data Sources and Analysis

The choice of research methodology has been motivated by a desire to interrogate the manner in which Novuyo Rosa Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012) and Christopher Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019) portray migrant existence and survivability in and beyond Zimbabwe. In pursuit of the research objectives outlined in this introduction, subsequent chapters will build on close reading and textual examination of the selected literary works. These texts are seen as embedded within the context of transborder migration and having focus on migrant lives in local and foreign spaces. In this regard, attention will be paid to passages and extracts that thematically point to existence, survivability and systems of domination in the face of migration encapsulated in the two literary texts. This will be done with a view to examining transborder migration as a web of intersecting forces; transnational identities and subjectivities; and the psychosocial dimension as a constituent of migrant lives in the homeland and hostland.

Regarding the body of literature dealt with in this research project, it should be stated that I have deliberately limited myself to Zimbabwean writers/voices whom/which I find to be concerned with issues of existence and survivability in the context of transborder migration. As works of literature, the selected creative works fall in the category of prose fiction. In this respect, Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019) write from a realistic perspective with a subject matter reflecting the quotidian experiences of ordinary individuals. Meyer H. Abrams (1988) observes that realism is employed by literary critics in two predominant ways namely to identify a literary movement of the nineteenth century, mostly in prose fiction and "to designate a recurrent mode, in various eras, of representing human life and experience in literature, which was exemplified by writers of this historical movement" (Ibid: 152).

My position here is that the selected texts for this study are informed by realism as a literary convention to capture the events unfolding in migrant character's lives both in Zimbabwe and South Africa. As a socially engaged mode of writing, "realistic fiction […] present an accurate imitation of life as it is" (Ibid: 152). As typical realists, Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi

(2019) represent the environment in Zimbabwe as unbearable to would-be migrant characters who are faced with entangled constraints as they strive to negotiate individual existence and survival. Mpho, Nomsa, Tafi, Mi and Qinisela are typical characters in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* who are pushed towards the edge in the homeland before taking the resolve to migrate to Johannesburg where their individual lives remain untenable.

Abrams (1988) explains that "the typical realist sets out to write a fiction which will give the illusion that it reflects life and the social world as it seems to the reader […] [and] the subject is represented or 'rendered' in such a way to give the reader the illusion of actual and ordinary experience" (Ibid: 153). Apparently, realistic fiction projects the experiences of the working class people "who live through ordinary experiences […] who find life rather dull and often unhappy […] [the realist writer] make the work seem a reflection of everyday reality" (Ibid: 154). Qinisela in *The Border Jumper*, for instance, typifies this soon after crossing the Limpopo River as a group of undocumented migrants with Mbedzi as their guide. From one angle, Mlalazi (2019) projects Qinisela's persistent daily challenges when they are nabbed by South African border patrol officers where they are compelled to pay for the passageway: "He handed all the money to Mbedzi, a pain in his heart" (Ibid: 13). The reader here is invited to decipher the intricate forces punctuating migration as an experience. On the other angle, Tshuma (2012) picturizes how the daily lives of migrant characters in the text are straitjacketed in Johannesburg. Aunt Ntombi, a character in "You in Paradise", is susceptible to police raids as a result of her undocumented status. At one point she is forced to "calmly pull[ed] down her panties and lay on the floor" as proof that she no longer has extra money on her person to pay as bribe to the police (Ibid: 134). Such portrayal highlights the manner in which the land beyond borders threatens characters' existence as much as it does in the homeland.

It is in the realm of realistic fiction that I read *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*. I emplace the two texts in what Bassey Oben and Letitia Uloma Egege (2018) describe as 'African literary perspectives between activism and realism'. The authors stress how African writers – through the power of the pen – "express their frustration of the failed states in the aftermath of the wasted struggle for independence" where the new black elites who assumed power upon the attainment of independence turned into "self-serving dictators immersed in corruption" (Ibid: 2179). Chinua Achebe, Ngugi WaThiong'o, Wole Soyinka, Ayi Kwei Amah, Dambudzo Marechera, Charles Mungoshi and Mongo Beti are among the earliest crop

of African intellectual figures who responded – through writing – to the perceived post-colonial disenchantment in their respective countries.

It is in this context that I, therefore, make sense of Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019) as contemporary intellectual literary watchdogs (Oben & Egege, 2018) representing the continuing post-independence disappointment, socio-economic and political quandary in Zimbabwe as a typical failed African state. This explains the mass migrations by Zimbabweans to South Africa as captured in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* where my enterprise is to critically analyse migrant existence and survivability in both countries. I further locate the selected texts in what Jonathan Crush and Daniel Tevera (2010) describe as "the current migration flow of Zimbabweans into South Africa [which] is extremely mixed […] there are almost as many women migrants as men; there are migrants of all ages…" (n.p). The selected texts, one might argue, offer a fictional representation of the Zimbabwean diasporic community in South Africa.

I analyse and interpret the chosen primary texts in their context. As such, the following methods of research will be discussed and applied. Literature, it should be noted, is not something to be approached from a limiting position. Hence, Mark Kramer (2000) argues that art is not something to be perceived "for itself" as art or entertainment. Rather, it is something mixed with social occasion, politics, power struggles, drama or ritual. Leonard B. Meyer (1956) observes that meaning and communication in literature cannot be separated from the cultural context in which they arise. Therefore, an understanding of the cultural and stylistic presuppositions of a piece of literary work is absolutely essential to the analysis of meaning. As the art of the eye more than the ear, literature, according to John Blacking (2000), is not a language that describes the way society seems to be, but a metaphorical expression of feelings associated with the way society really is.

Here, I read *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* as a reflection of, and response to, social forces where, for instance, Mpho in *Shadows* is depicted being victimised by the police in Bulawayo working under the shadow of the ruling party after he publicly remonstrates against the poverty they, as the ordinary Zimbabwean people, are facing. Mpho is forced to flee to Johannesburg where he finds the foreign environment threateningly painful. He treks back home where he gets arrested after further staging a mono-demonstration over the missing body of his dead mother at Mpilo hospital who dies shortly before his departure for South Africa. Implicit here are the systems of domination attending to both societies and countries

where characters are always mobile and unsettled. If literature is indeed – of which it is – a 'metaphorical expression', 'a reflection', 'response', 'communication', 'culture', 'context related', 'historical', 'political', 'philosophical', the list is endless, then context sensitive analyses are more effective than general, functionalist and sequential descriptions of literary texts as another kind of creative art. In that order, I have chosen critical social research methods like *discourse analysis* and *content analysis* for the purpose of this research project.

According to Lee Harvey (1990), critical social research methodology stems from the belief that knowledge is never completed, it is never finished, because the social world is constantly changing. Knowledge, in this understanding, can never be separated from values. As members of the social world, artists are bound to be influenced by their values and those of society. Acting as the eyes, ears and voices of society, artists "aim to get beyond the dominant values of society, to try to see what is going on underneath the surface" (Michael Haralambos & Martin Holborn, 2004: 881). Critical research methods are particularly concerned with revealing oppressive structures so that such structures might be changed. Harvey (1990) boldly asserts that it is important that the account (literary work) be located in a wider context which links the specific activities within a broader social structural and historical analysis. Thus, the analysis of *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* can be linked to socio-political and economic forces inherent in migrant characters' existence and survivability in and beyond Zimbabwe. Other features such as social relationships, dominant ideologies and historical contexts are very much a part of critical social research methods as the discussion that follow shall indicate.

1.7.2 Discourse Analysis

According to Michael Stubbs (1983: 1) discourse analysis is, "(a) concerned with language 'use' beyond the boundaries of a sentence/utterance, (b) concerned with the interrelationships between language and society and (c) concerned with the interactive or dialogic properties of everyday communication." It follows that discourse analysis is concerned with language use in social contexts. Stef Slembrouck (2006: 1) argues that discourse analysis foregrounds "language as social action, language use as situated performance, language use as tied to social relations and identities, power, inequality and social struggle." Language, therefore, is part and parcel of our social being. The same view is shared by Alice D. Kwaramba (1997) who argues that discourse analysis is based on the theory that, every writer, speaker or musician, talks about a subject or topic in a given social context. There is no choice of words

and linguistic expression in a text which is ideologically innocent. It is for this reason that I have chosen discourse analysis as a tool to analyse Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012) and Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019). Its concern with choice of words in specific contexts makes it an appropriate method of research for this study.

1.7.3 Content Analysis

Content analysis has been chosen for its emphasis upon objectivity, reliability and simplicity – factors that make it appealing (Ray Pawson & Nicky Tilley, 1997). Bethel Powers and Thomas R. Knapp (2006) describe content analysis as a general term explaining diverse methods employed in the analysis of a text. Content analysis, as a method of analysing given data both in qualitative and quantitative approaches, stands as a systematic coding and grouping method adopted in research to explore huge volumes of textual information with the aim of determining trends and patterns of words as well as issues to do with their frequency and relationships, their structures and discourses inherent in communication (Phillip Mayring, 2000; Carol Grbich, 2007; Judith Green & Nicki Thorogood, 2004). Thus, content analysis allows the study to leaf through entangled interrelationships punctuating migrant characters' lives in the two texts following a descriptive approach to interpret the content (Barbara Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; David L. Morgan, 1993).

Mojtaba Vaismoradi, Hannade Turunen and Terese Bondas (2013) observe that content analysis is used to explore unknown phenomena. Thus, the study's motive to unmask migrant existence and survivability and contribute to the discourse of migration from a literary perspective is enhanced by content analysis. Michael Bloor and Fiona Wood (2006, cited in Vaismoradi et al. 2013: 400) maintain that content analysis serves to provide the nature of the document's content through looking precisely at "who says what, to whom, and with what effect". Content analysis, therefore, is chosen to "see through and interpret" (Steyn, 2015: 386) communicative contexts in the selected texts and bring to light the interaction between characters. By focusing on the content of these texts, the study potentially evinces systems of domination playing out in migrant characters' mother country and beyond borders as a result of identity fluidity, place, space and time.

Three approaches in content analysis have been identified and these inform critical analysis of the selected texts. These are *formal content analysis*, which involves the systematic engagement with texts for study within their historical context; *thematic analysis* which is aimed at discovering the ideological biases, purposes and intentions of Novuyo Rosa Tshuma

(2012) and Christopher Mlalazi (2019) as artists within a specific historical epoch; *textual analysis*, which involves examining the linguistic devices within the selected texts in order to show how they influence and encourage a particular interpretation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

1.8 Ethical Considerations

The study does not entail direct engagement between myself and individuals. Therefore, it is my responsibility, as a researcher, to exercise optimum respect for intellectual property when analysing the selected texts and other bodies of knowledge that include various opinions. David R. Resnik (2011) observes that researchers ought to bear in mind the importance of, and fully exercise, respect for intellectual property both published and unpublished. He goes on to expound on the need for researchers to desist from plagiarism and to "give proper acknowledgement or credit for all contributions to research" (Ibid: 7.). It is from the strength of this exhortation that I will adhere to proper research ethic. All material borrowed from published and unpublished works will be fully, accurately and clearly cited and acknowledged.

1.8.1 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is not necessary as the texts I will be interpreting are accessible on the public domain.

1.8.2 Reflexivity

Carolyn Ellis and Art Bochner (2000) observe that reflexivity points to the manner in which the researcher inspects themselves and their individual presence within the research process. In this regard, reflexive practice will interrogate how my presence in the study shapes everything from the conception of the research topic to the analysis of the selected literary texts. While I draw from existing scholarship, I endeavour to make my humble contribution to knowledge by critically engaging with the two texts in ways that add value to knowledge creation.

1.9 Chapter Delineation

This research report is divided into five chapters. Chapter One is a motivated declaration of intent. It traces the background of the research. The chapter maps the direction that the study takes, vividly stating its objectives and justifying the perceived need for such research.

Chapter Two proposes an understanding of transborder migration as a web of intersecting forces. It advances this proposition through a reading of the selected texts. The chapter seeks to demonstrate that migrant lives in Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi's (2019) texts are constricted in the homeland, on the borderlines during movement, and after arrival in the hostland.

Chapter Three focuses on transnational identities and subjectivities. The key argument in this chapter is that characters in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* assume a multiplicity of identities and subjectivities as they move through different local and foreign spaces. The chapter seeks to show that the various identities and subjectivities inform the fashion in which characters exist and survive in the face of transborder migration.

Chapter Four considers the manner in which the psychosocial dimension is a constituent of migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe. The advanced point in this chapter is that the existence and survivability of migrant characters both in local and foreign spaces is conditioned by the interplay between psychic and social aspects.

Chapter Five summarizes and concludes the research project. It recaps the findings of the preceding chapters.

Chapter Two: The entanglement of forces in transborder migration

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter set the tone of this research by situating it within the context of migration studies in terms of the aim, literature review, theoretical framework and methodology. The present chapter focuses on *Shadows* (2012) and *The Border Jumper* (2019). The underlying question addressed in chapter 2 is how the selected texts open new vistas that enable conceptualisation of migration as a web of intersecting forces. Thus, I explore migrant everyday lives in the selected texts with a view to canvassing the systems of domination informing and shaping existence and survivability in spaces local and foreign to migrant characters. There exist scholarship on global migration as well as scholarship on migration as it relates to Zimbabwe and Zimbabwean migrants who are coming into South Africa. Extant scholarship focuses more on social, economic, political, labour and population studies and very little exist in terms of literary studies, especially as it relates to these particular texts which I find to be virgin forest awaiting to be explored. Moreso, particularly when I bring in the theory of intersectionality coupled with five faces of oppression, multiple identities and habitus as conceptual frameworks.

Michael A. Gomez (2005) examines African migration and the notion of African diaspora from an anthropological lens. He explains that the condition of being an African diasporic subject can not only be understood from the perspective of one coming out of Africa, but also attributed to people of African descent living either outside or in places within the African continent that were distant from their birth places. As the author shows, these people constitute what he terms an *intra*-African diaspora. Elsewhere, Jonathan Crush and Daniel Tevera (2010) examine Zimbabwean migration into South Africa from a population studies perspective. They show that the demography constitute migrants of all ages, stretching from young children to the old and those who are not in good health, professionals and non-professionals. Marie Laura Clark (2017) interrogates the vulnerability of Mexican women to sexual assault at the United States and Mexico border from a socio-political perspective. She draws on intersectionality to evince Mexican women's intricate migration experiences. In the same vein, Sarah-Jane Renfroe (2018) explores the migration experiences of undocumented Latina migrants in the United States from an intersectional perspective. She brings to light how the women face multiple forms of oppression in Orlando, Florida. Johannes Machinya (2019) examines the labour experiences of undocumented Zimbabwean migrants in Witbank,

South Africa, from a social studies viewpoint. He documents how they are politically docile and economically exploitable.

The current argument differs from the above scholars. This chapter is informed by intersectionality theory and the concept of five faces of oppression, complemented by discourse analysis and content analysis as methods to interpret the two texts. The above scholarship employs the theory of intersectionality from a social, political, population, gender and feminist studies perspective. In apparent contradistinction to the above, I am using the same theory from a literary studies lens in order to have a sociology of literature on migration, especially with regards to *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*. I show the entanglement of forces in migrant lives where Zimbabwe, as home to characters in the two texts, has its own forces; the movement of characters from the homeland across the borderlands into the hostland has its own forces; and Johannesburg, the land beyond borders, is also punctuated by its own peculiar forces. These forces, I show, intersect in the everyday existence and survival of migrant characters and serve the reader with an understanding of transborder migration as a web of intersecting forces.

2.2 An inhibitive home: The resolve to leave

Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019) portray Zimbabwe as an inhibiting space where characters exist and survive under menacing conditions. It is a place that Thabisani Ndlovu (2010: 120) describes, from a viewpoint of Zimbabwean out-migration, as a "home [that] can […] disappoint, constrict, endanger, and indeed, kill". Following this idea of representation in narrative, one might argue that there is a pointer to critical realistic fiction. This evokes Magdalena Pfalzgraf's (2022: 3) observation that "contemporary Zimbabwean fiction presents an extremely interesting case for the study of literary engagements with migration and other forms of movement". This explains the context in which to locate my critical analysis of migrant lives in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Flora Veit-Wild (2006) examines the efficacy of literary criticism to the post-2000 Zimbabwean crisis. She describes the years 2000 – 2010 as a period which precipitately engendered 'new books on Zimbabwean literature', whereby different creative writers challenged the Zimbabwean government's dominant narrative regarding the crisis through the power of the pen. Veit-Wild (2006) explains that the crisis period witnessed the publication of creative literary works such as *Versions of Zimbabwe: New Approaches to Literature and Culture* by Robert Muponde and Ranka Primorac (ed) (2005), where various critics' voices express anxiety over the events

unfolding in the Zimbabwean nation at the present time in history. This line of contention is shared by Oliver Nyambi (2013) who explores this period of crisis in relation to what he describes as 'alternative literary representations of Zimbabwe post-2000'. He argues that Zimbabwean writers offered alternative perspectives which assessed, questioned and challenged the government's grand narrative of what is referred to as the 'lost decade'.

This period of crisis witnessed writers such as Valerie Tagwira (2006), amongst others, representing Zimbabwean lives engulfed by instability, uncertainty and hopelessness. It is the continuation of this critical meta-narrative (Veit-Wild, 2006) that we see Tshuma and Mlalazi extending in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*. In "Shadows", the novella in *Shadows*, Tshuma (2012) depicts Zimbabwe, through Bulawayo, as a nation on its knees, experiencing socio-economic downturn and political rot. Bulawayo, in this context, is significant as a microcosm of Zimbabwe. Nhlanhla Sibanda and Sikholiwe Dube (2018) contend that the socio-historical experience of Bulawayo, as an urban centre, has been shaped not only by its encounter with colonial governments and social change but also its post-independence experience with the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) government which has been punctuated by exclusion and concerted efforts to efface "the experiences of the Ndebele ethnic group in the national cultural symbols" (Ibid: 43). These sentiments are validated by Otrude Ntokozo Moyo (2007) who observes that Bulawayo, as a place of 'obliterated histories', assumed an emblem of underdevelopment in the post-independence period amidst the nation's strides to promote rebuilding and equity. She asserts that "the history of Bulawayo has revealed that individuals and families have had to negotiate and renegotiate their existence for generations in the face of complex socio-economic and political changes, colonial capitalism, political violence and the collapse of the economy, leading to substantial migration" (Ibid: 52). Implied is a Bulawayo that is understood as a contested space battling to maintain its peripheral existence.

Sibanda and Dube (2018) go further to explain that Bulawayo tells a tale of heightened closure of companies and massive de-industrialisation, especially in the post-2000 period. This is the Bulawayo that Albert Nyathi, in a poem titled 'Ode to Departed Writers' (cited in *Short Writings from Bulawayo III*, 2006, edited by J. Morris), expresses as having 'a culture of queuing for basic commodities'. Nyathi laments the prevalence of acute shortage of fuel coupled with pervading corruption, prostitution and crime in Bulawayo. What stands out to a discerning reader is a Bulawayo characterised by a checkered past with a bearing on its future. NoViolet Bulawayo (2011), in an article published in *Newsweek*, enlightens the fate of

Bulawayo. She signposts Bulawayo as a city of "angry, hungry citizens…flock[ing] to demonstrate in the streets, only to be beaten and rounded up by the police and sent to jails" (n.p). The reader, therefore, is served with a picture of a Bulawayo yearning for redemption.

Elsewhere, Meg Samuelson (2007) explores Yvonne Vera's instantiation of Bulawayo in *Butterfly Burning* (1998) and *The Stone Virgins* (2002). Samuelson (2007: 22) contends that "Vera inscribes Bulawayo across a period of forty years – from colonial town, through independence and Matabeleland massacres, to postcolonial city". The author demonstrates how Vera's narrative in the two texts is characterised by restless urban subjects being deprived subjective agency by the colonial force. Inherent in these portrayed historical phases is the deep-seated injustices that people of Matabeleland have always been susceptible to both in pre and post-independence Zimbabwe. In terms of climate, Matabeleland is a drought-stricken province and this notion of drought could be extrapolated to the scarcity of both investment and human rights in the region. This is the same place that has a pressure (political) group, Mthwakhazi, which has been on record agitating for secession from Zimbabwe.

Similarly, Tshuma (2012) projects Bulawayo as a space that calls for what Simbarashe Gukurume (2015: 219) explains as "livelihood resilience in a hyperinflationary environment". Mpho, the protagonist-narrator in "Shadows", gives the reader an impression of the city of Bulawayo marred by "the chaos of daily living" and "burst pipes and burst transformers entwined with warped electricity wires" (48). In this case, the reader's mind is tickled to ponder what it means to exist and belong in such an environment. It is a space in which one's breathing becomes itself a burden – a place riddled with what Shimmer Chinodya (2007) signposts as 'strife'. Mpho is fatherless and he intimates that "[his] roots lay in shallow soils which lacked substance" (25). He grows up under the care of his mother whom he describes as "a veteran prostitute past retirement age and still forging ahead" (21). Apparently existing in what Petina Gappah (2016) expresses elsewhere as 'the land of the unemployed', Mpho's mother sustains herself and her son through commercial sex work. Mpho's existence in Bulawayo is encumbered and he is "defeated by the troubles of [his] life" (15). Having a soiled, fractured and violent relationship with his mother stemming from her insatiable involvement in commercial sex work, Mpho finds relief in Nomsa, her lover whose mother, Holly, is a close associate to Mpho's mother and "they met wherever it is that prostitutes meet" (21).

There is hardly a sense of family between Mpho and his mother whom he sternly warns at one point that "I shall burn down this house, and you in it" (56). Irrespective of the violent and disrespectful relationship that he constantly shares with his mother who is on antiretroviral (ARV) medication, Mpho's everyday life and means of survival are, nonetheless, dependent on her. He is compelled by unbearable circumstances to "saddle Mama on [his] back and trek to the clinic" (48) when she is ailing. It is a time when everything is not enough, where a number of people barely sustain themselves from the proceeds of formal employment (Gukurume, 2015). In this case, Mpho and her mother are obliged to join the queue for ARVs at Mpilo Hospital in the city of Bulawayo where there is:

> Waiting. Waiting. More waiting. There is nothing special about it, it's everywhere. My generation may wait all their lives. In the end, people will forget what it is that they are waiting for (*Shadows*, 49).

The underlying drive in this snippet points to protracted poverty and pitiful conditions overwhelming everyday lives of the general populace in Tshuma's (2012) Zimbabwe. The author rightly demonstrates how Mpho's existence and survivability in his inhibitive homeland are limited. His mother dies at Mpilo Hospital due to lack of medical attention as they "have run out of ARVs!" (50). It is a point in time when patients are compelled to provide for themselves things like a drip as "the hospital can't afford" (51). Mpho ends up cursing the medical facility in Tshuma's (2012) Zimbabwe where "the nurses let one patient die…no medication…you think: fuck this goddam country…fuck this government…then you just think: fuck" (51). Demonstrated here is utter dismay and hopelessness inherent in the everyday existence and survivability of individuals like Mpho as a result of the failure by the government of the day to provide for its citizens. This explains the particulars of a nail-biting homeland.

Mpho's perception of his mother country, demonstrated in the above extract, is reminiscent of the narrator in Dambudzo Marechera's *The House of Hunger* (1978) when he says, "class-consciousness and the conservative snobbery that goes with it are deeply rooted in the African elite…" (49). Marechera (1978), through the narrator, expresses a vote of no confidence in Black nationalists such as Robert Mugabe and others well before Zimbabwe's independence, something that we witness years later through the representation of Mpho in democratic Zimbabwe. Plainly, the post-independence Zimbabwean government is depicted as an absent father whose children all but curse their fate and end up with 'a harvest of

thorns' (Chinodya, 1989). There is irresponsibility and suppression masterminded by a violent hand where one exists in a haven of powerlessness. Due to poverty and financial constraints, Mpho fails to arrange the burial of his mother. Nomsa's advice to Mpho to "go and get her body" (73) at Mpilo Hospital and put in place her proper send-off is a daunting task which Mpho cannot afford. Here, the reader is invited to decipher pitiable characters' existence in the text where one cannot afford to hold a funeral ceremony. Mpho exists in quandary where he tells Nomsa that "I feel like I'm in chains…I just… I just want us to be free…all of us, as people, you know?" (74). Zimbabwe, as home to Mpho, Nomsa and other characters, is depicted as an inhibitive and stifling space.

Tshuma (2012) explicitly shows how the everyday existence of characters is enmeshed in entrapment where they hardly have agency to shape their own destiny. It is here where Mpho's difficulties interlace as Nomsa pressurizes him to provide for her:

> There you go again. There you go again. Get your head out of the clouds, Mpho. What about me? What about us? You need to get a proper job. You need to make money. I will not live like this for the rest of my life…It's time to be a man, Mpho. I am a woman, and I need a man (*Shadows*, 74).

Implied here is a Zimbabwe, a home that emasculates. There is a demonstration of strained male-female relationships which is a thematic and narrative trope in Zimbabwean literature. The only way men can redeem themselves from emasculation is through sex. This is the same Zimbabwe which, at one time, was called Southern Rhodesia and which emasculated men like Chisaga in Chenjerai Hove's *Bones* (1988), to a point where the only way to redeem himself is to rape Janifa. The notion of a Zimbabwe that emasculates is a trope captured in texts written in different historical moments dating back to the colonial context.

As a result of this emasculation, Nomsa on one hand, perceives Mpho as a constraint to her well-being as he fails to live up to her expectations. This is so despite Mpho's strivings to secure accommodation for Nomsa, which Mpho describes as a "single room I rent for her… the mattress I have given her…it's a modest space, with a two-plate stove in the corner and clothes spilling out of a battered suitcase" (15). On the other hand, Mpho considers Nomsa a threatening force to his fate as she keeps on demanding what he cannot afford with his art which he considers as "[his] job, [his] life" (74). There is collision of the forces of poverty here where Nomsa tells Mpho that his art is "rubbish [that] doesn't even pay" (74) and Mpho dismisses Nomsa's pleas by telling her to "marry a businessman" (74). The 'chains' of

poverty engender a fight between the two where Mpho unleashes against Nomsa "a backhanded slap that sends her across the sofa" (74). Tshuma (2012) here brings into view how both Mpho and Nomsa, whose mothers survive through prostitution, exist in poverty and pitiful conditions in an unnamed township of Bulawayo before taking resolve to migrate to South Africa.

Tshuma (2012) brings to light the violence characterising the space in "Shadows". There is socio-economic and political upheavals in Bulawayo where Mpho and Rasta, his colleague and artist whom he meets at the Art Gallery, advises him that "politicians are all the same, shitheads all of them…we are squashed between imperialism on the one hand, boy, and black colonialism on the other…we, the people, are going to burst" (57). Rasta's lament here is testament to the toxic power dynamics that play out in one's mother country. Rasta furnishes Mpho with Steve Biko's book, *I Write What I Like* (1978) which is suggestive of a 'pill of consciousness' and a wake-up call to the oppressive hand pervading characters' lives in Zimbabwe. This democratic deficit is echoed in Marechera's *House of Hunger* (1978) when the narrator engages in an exchange with Philip and Doug over the politics of the moment being depicted in the text. They concede amongst themselves that "politics is shit…White people are shit…And black people are shit…everybody human shits, that's the trouble" (49). Both Marechera (1978) and Tshuma (2012) are giving an account of how political toxicity has been, and continues to be, the staple and trademark for African governments.

Tshuma (2012) astutely captures the cataclysmic spaces punctuated with demonstrations and government repression through the armed security forces. Zimbabwe is painted as an environment where the face of the president "is the hallmark of authoritarianism in the shape of a fist" (65). This is reminiscent of the 'big brother is watching you' principle in George Orwell's seminal text *Nineteen Eighty Four* (1949) where he is predicting what the Communist society would be like in 1984. In the text, people exist under the microscopic eye of the system where each house has a telescreen to facilitate its monitoring by the Big Brother who is able to watch the people even when they are asleep. This kind of surveillance is present in *Shadows* (2012), even though it plays out in the mind.

Explicitly, people in Tshuma's (2012) Zimbabwe are facing "monumental livelihood challenges" (Gukurume, 2015: 219). Mpho and Rasta try to register their displeasure and join protests marshalled "against the government's ungracious destruction of illegal dwellings and

unsanctioned structures" (59). The masses are in possession of a khaki cardboard banner authored by Rasta which reads:

> *We say NO kill no people*
> *We say NO to more destruction*
> *We say FEED the people*
> *We say LOVE the people* (italics in the original) (*Shadows*, 59).

The passage evinces that people are facing an avalanche of challenges, where the armed riot police is unleashed to quell the demonstrations. Apart from being killed, people are losing homes and they are facing hunger and starvation all in the same breath. This brings to light how difficulties intersect in the daily experiences of people in Tshuma's (2012) Zimbabwe. There exist what Devon Carbado et al. (2013), arguing from an intersectional lens, call 'hidden subtleties within power dynamics'. Mpho and Rasta are caught up in the mayhem where Mpho falls victim to the bullet that lands on his back in his attempts to save his precious life and "could feel the blood seeping through [his] shirt" (60). Contrary to Rasta's hue and cry in the banner for the government to desist from murdering its citizens, Mpho finds Rasta "lying dead in the middle of Lobengula Street" (61). This is indicative of what Gugulethu Siziba (2017), in her analysis of Brian Chikwava's *Harare North* (2009), rightly observes as "Zimbabwe's structural and political violence" (Ibid: 1).

It is under these tiring circumstances that Mpho, after losing his mother and Rasta, who "became the closest thing like a father to [him]" (54), tries to hold an exhibition at the Art Gallery. Mpho has a confused existence and could not even take a simple bath. Daily challenges keep mounting and Mpho is barred by Miss Mlilo from holding an exhibition as he did not book in advance. Besides, Miss Mlilo appears to doubt Mpho's "artistic credentials" (80). Mpho has constant exposure to violence that characterises the relations between him and his mother, as well as the society itself. In that regard, Mpho concedes that "violence had become everything to [him]" (62). He goes against Miss Mlilo's instruction and displays his "work on the pavement, outside the Art Gallery" (83) where the crowd is attracted to the exhibition he dubs "*Goodbye Mama*" (Italics in the original) (82). Mpho's artwork allures the crowd and he finds himself "commanding such chaos" (83) where, in a fit of irony and satire, some hard-pressed citizens mistake the gathering to be a queue for basic necessities like bread or cooking oil.

Mpho considers art as his "job…[his] art is [his] job, [his] life" (74). In this context, art points to the representation of life through artistic images. Art, to Mpho, becomes a means to an end – it stands as a way of surviving. Art is a process through which Mpho sanitizes himself to remain sane. When all else has failed, Mpho resorts to art as an expression of the everyday, an expression of the architecture of resilience. Evidently, the text captures the "precarity of underclasses living in abject poverty and leading invisible lives" (Siziba, 2017: 4) in Zimbabwe. Mpho's unsanctioned exhibition renders him into further trouble with the "Zimbabwe Police" whose aggressive deportment show "all serious business" (84). He is forced, once again, to run for his dear life after a "policeman strikes [him] across [the] face" before he retaliates and "run […] through the chaos, into Sixth Avenue and across the road" (85).

Mpho finds life exceedingly fuzzy in a nation elsewhere depicted by Musaemura Zimunya (1982) as a nation of drought and hunger. It is a nation where it dawns on Mpho that a funeral ceremony for his mother is too costly to hold. His woes are compounded by the unfortunate murder of Rasta during a political demonstration. He is turned into a lonely figure and his attempts to search for Nomsa are shuttered when "Mrs Ndlovu, Nomsa's landlady" (85), breaks the disheartening news to him that Nomsa "left for Joburg this morning" (88). Apparently, Nomsa leads a miserable life in Bulawayo where she is not in good books with her mother, Holly. According to Mpho, Nomsa and Holy "do not speak" (21) and Nomsa hates her mother as Holly allows her boyfriends to sexually abuse her. Resultantly, Nomsa has had to depend on Mpho for subsistence as she could not bear the exploitation she is exposed to at her mother's hands. Having realised Mpho's quandary and lack of full responsibility, and possibly a brighter future, Nomsa finds diaspora the best bet to change her fate. Her departure for Johannesburg can, therefore, be read as a catalyst to Mpho's premature movement from Zimbabwe to South Africa having a host of forces on his back.

Tshuma (2012) reveals the forces attending to migrant lives at home through an unnamed female protagonist-narrator in "Crossroads". The female narrator exposes the socio-economic challenges she faces upon coming to Harare from an unnamed place to stay with her relatives when she is applying for a visa at the South African Embassy. There are electricity and water shortages in Harare where the nameless narrator is forced to make use of the candle or "make do with the dark" (176). Pictured here is a Zimbabwe where one is caught up in a mindboggling situation referred to by Cuthbeth Tagwirei (2014) questioningly, 'should I stay or should I go?' The nameless narrator bears the unwelcoming behaviour by her relatives.

She is compelled by circumstances to come to Harare "where all embassies are situated" (176). Tshuma (2012) presents corrosive family ties when the nameless narrator travels to the South African Embassy in the earliest morning without having food and "burdened by a grumbling stomach" (177). Underlying here is the interlacing of problems being faced by the unnamed narrator where "great ingenuity, resilience and […] immense resourcefulness" (Gukurume, 2015) are key. The nameless narrator stays resolute in her endeavour to migrate to South Africa and "summoned the Higher Powers to walk with [her]" (176) to the embassy. The quagmire appears to go unabated and when she arrives at the South African Embassy, she is "dismayed to discover that, for all [her] effort, the queue already runs the length of the perimeter fence and peters out into the road" (176–7).

In this case, the nameless narrator is compelled to adapt to the threatening circumstances she finds herself in. She exists in a space described by Mpho in "Shadows" as embellished with continuous waiting. The nameless narrator seeks the services of a woman who is amongst individuals "queuing for those who do not have the means to be here early, charging a fee for services rendered" (178). The text, therefore, enlightens a space where people have to be versatile and creative in order to survive in a country described by Qinisela in *The Border Jumper* (2019) as having "no money, no jobs, politics destroying everything and prices skyrocketing everyday" (162). Tshuma (2012) depicts the complexities of migration where the unnamed narrator's existence is limited. She pays forty rand to get position sixteen in the queue and manages to submit her documents inside the South African Embassy to a "woman [who] does not look up [at the nameless narrator] as she directs [her] to yet another queue to pay administration fee, tells [her] to come for [her] visa in two weeks' time" (180). Having unsupportive family members in Harare, the nameless narrator places her hopes on her aunt Mi in Johannesburg, from whom she borrows money to foot her "traveller's cheques worth R2 000 [which] [she] must give back upon arrival" (179). The nameless narrator seduces a police officer "old enough to be [her] father: a phone number, fake promises" (179) as a means to obtain police clearance in Harare. Discernible here is the creativity to survive in a harsh and threatening environment. The nameless narrator boldly exploits and goes beyond the masculine power to sustain herself in a seemingly impenetrable space. She employs different tactics to prevail the intersecting forces threatening her existence and survivability in an inhibitive homeland.

Elsewhere, Mlalazi (2019) envisions Qinisela's existence and survivability in Bulawayo. Having lost his father, Happiness Dube, who "died with Mr Johnson, his employer, in a car

accident" (87), Qinisela and Martha, his younger sister, grow up under the guardianship of their mother, MaTshabalala. Qinisela, thus, tries but could not succeed to financially support his mother who operates "a food stall in the beer garden" (85) in Bulawayo's township of Pumula. Evidently, Qinisela's family exist in deplorable conditions, living in a "no good two roomed house" (85) which Qinisela's mother struggles to raise money to pay rent and electricity for. Qinisela and his family lead invisible lives and they constitute one of Zimbabwe's underclasses (Siziba, 2017). Qinisela fails to secure a proper job in the face of Zimbabwe's reeling economy and political instability. He is not able to provide for little Martha whose "school uniform was now almost in rags and she had been going to school barefoot for almost a year" (85). In this context, *The Border Jumper* (2019) registers what Chika Unigwe, in complimenting Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012), describes as "the reality of life for 'small people' in contemporary Zimbabwe" (back cover script).

It is the pain of seeing his family's daily struggles at the full force of poverty that Qinisela takes a resolve to change his fate elsewhere. He begins to save the "little he made from his factory job, for his border jumping trip to Johannesburg" (85). What the discerning reader might find disheartening in the foregoing discussion is Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi's (2019) level of pessimism. Here, issues to do with socialist realism versus critical realism come into play. There is an apparent absence of hope in would-be migrant characters which would then take away this idea of socialist realism which serves to give people hope. Writers like Ngugi WaThiong'o employ a combination of socialist and critical realism, having heroes and heroines who are game changers. His seminal text *Matigari* (1987) exemplifies this line of reasoning. Socialist realism empowers the masses where they come together to revolt against an oppressive system. There is typification which goes with the representation of typical characters in typical circumstances (Abrams, 1988); life-like characters in life-like circumstances such as the character Matigari in WaThiong'o's (1987) text who is instantiated as the hero capable of instigating change to the status quo in colonial Kenya.

The pessimism in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* manifest in the sense that there is no possibility of any character making it in this moment of crisis to bring a glimmer of hope. Everything is seemingly negative and the solution is just to run away from home as Qinisela in *The Border Jumper* plans to do. Hope is reserved in running away where the nameless narrator in Tshuma's "Shadows" experiences hardships right at the South African embassy, which is a glimpse of extensive hardships that she is going to face as a migrant character in the hostland. However, beneath the pessimism, Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019) want the

reader to know that running away from a debilitating home is not the only option because even those officially documented go through 'hard times' (Charles Dickens, 1854), firstly in procuring the passport and the visa, and during the travelling itself albeit being officially documented. The two writers here appear to be questioning, from a critical realist lens, whether it is really worth it to take a resolve to run away from an excruciating home. Here the reader's mind is being tickled to ponder.

2.3 Individuals on the move and in-betweenness experiences

The previous section looked at constraints that would-be migrants in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* face at home. It was established that characters face numerous and intricate challenges that push them towards the edge, where the only alternative is to leave the motherland for other lands beyond borders. The present section focuses on the experiences of migrant characters after their departure from home and before their arrival in Johannesburg – the in-between conundrum – that is the destination for characters in the two texts. This section evinces the nitty-gritties of what migrant characters encounter when crossing the border and on the borderland. Tshuma (2012) brings to light the challenges faced by documented migrants at the border and Mlalazi (2019) projects the quandary faced by undocumented migrants in crossing the Limpopo River and on the borderland en route to Johannesburg.

Previous research did figure out the degree to which South Africa has been and continues to be the recipient of migrants from within Africa and across the world. This is reflected in Phaswani Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* (2002) which portrays the metropolitan nature of Hillbrow as a rendezvous where you find every person from every nation. Mpe (2002) captures xenophobia and how African internationals are stereotypically referred to as *Makwerekwere* in post-apartheid South Africa: "Migrants deduced from such media reports that AIDS's travel route into Johannesburg was through *Makwerekwere*; and Hillbrow was the sanctuary in which *Makwerekwere* basked" (3 – 4). Implied here is the scapegoating of migrants in South Africa, a phenomenon which almost and always instigates violence and hatred towards foreign nationals. The concept of Hillbrow as a haven for migrants is also gestured towards by Clifford Bestall (2012) in a film titled *Hillbrow: Between Heaven and Hell*. The film shows how Hillbrow, once a haven for white people in colonial times, is now occupied by local migrants, who migrated from rural areas and townships, as well as foreign migrants from beyond South African borders. The documentary film captures Hillbrow as a

place where Zimbabweans and Nigerians, among other migrants, come to eke a living amid crisis back home: "Every time when an African country is hit by strife, the tremor is felt in Hillbrow" (00:08:05). Hillbrow stands as an overcrowded and least developed inner-city of post-apartheid Johannesburg where prostitution, crime and drug peddling are rife. One might argue that Hillbrow remains an ideal place for migrants who consider Johannesburg a home.

Research conducted before show how migrants from Zimbabwe and other African countries from the north find it relatively arduous to pass through Beitbridge border post (Innocent Moyo, 2020; Francis Musoni, 2016). These scholars chronicle how migrants resort to gaining entry into South Africa by unconventional means. *Shadows* (2012) presents transborder migration as a process laced with challenges for documented Zimbabwean migrants. The nameless female narrator in "Crossroads", who constantly refers to herself in the second person pronoun "You", explicates the forces associated with migrants during their movement from Zimbabwe to South Africa:

> Once you get through that immigration building, once you get through, it's as if you could fly. It is a long distance to the border – much, much longer than the distance. It is a distance measured not in kilometres, but in sweat and tears and ingenuity… and begging, and more begging (*Shadows*, 176 – 7).

Implicit in the passage is the notion of the border as a space where characters in the text find it increasingly unmanageable and onerous to contend with. It is a place where characters are robbed of their voice and agency, and their existence is encapsulated in powerlessness. Moyo (2020: 60) intimates that "the historical continuities of the Zimbabwe–South Africa crossborder migration provide a context in which such movements have continued, despite securitized borders, in post-apartheid South Africa". This idea of restrictive border control systems corresponds to Martin Walker's (2015) argument that securitized borders are informed by stringent immigration requirements that consolidate and validate the physical border in the form of walls or fences and border militarization. Demonstrated here are the challenges associated with borders and borderlands when they are employed as dismissive tools to outsiders.

My intention is to demonstrate how the national border between Zimbabwe and South Africa engenders what Young (1990) glibly describes as institutional constraints on self-determination. Tari, a fellow passenger to the nameless protagonist-narrator in "Crossroads", is portrayed as a crossborder trader between Zimbabwe and South Africa specialising in

"everything and anything" (175). Tari informs the nameless narrator that migrants spend between five and eight hours at the Beitbridge border post waiting for stamping of their travelling documents. Despite the difficulties he constantly faces at the border, Tari passes through that space twice a month. It is a place where his well-being is constrained but it is also a place where his survivability is tied to. Tari's description as a jack of all trades tells us more about his "insurmountable livelihood catastrophe" (Gukurume, 2015: 8). His continuous mobility between home and beyond borders is suggestive of him being one of Zimbabwe's underclasses, travellers and present-day 'marcopollos' leading invisible lives (Siziba, 2017). One might argue that Tari's failure to have specific merchandise shows his broadened strategy for survival. This lack of specificity is also a sign of adaptability and creativity as survival strategies. Tari, as a middleman, is able to supply whatever his customers may need and this explains creative ways of adapting and surviving in a moment of crisis. This, it can be stated, indicates the manner in which Tari is responding to the environment. The nameless narrator brings to the reader's attention the boredom and fizzling atmosphere she is subject to at Beitbridge border post where people have to get used to "the game of waiting" (174). Waiting, therefore, is a recurring trope and a social force inherent in migrant lives in *Shadows*. The notion of waiting speaks to what Samuel Beckett in *Waiting for Good t*(1956) refers to as a human condition whereby humans rely on illusions inorder 'to give hope to a meaningless existence'. How migrant characters in Tshuma's (2012) text wait for their passports to get stamped at the border is akin to the manner in which Beckett's (1956) characters Vladimir and Estragon pin their hopes on Godot, a God-like figure, whose presence ultimately never materialises.

Tshuma (2012) depicts a couple in "Crossroads" being barred entry into South Africa at the Beitbridge border. The nameless narrator describes the couple, whose wife is pregnant, as "impossibly young…the boy looks sixteen…the girl looks much younger…" (173). Apparently, the couple endures the pain of waiting, together with Tari and the nameless narrator, before it dawns on them that immigration officers will not allow the wife entry as her visa has a single day before it becomes obsolete. The text here demonstrates the dismissive and uncompromising behaviour by immigration officials at the border:

> The pregnant girl is holding her passport in dismay, staring at it like her world has just shattered into a million irretrievable pieces. DENIED – the word runs diagonally across the page. Her boyfriend puts a stiff arm around her. Hope knows no bounds. To come all this way, on a nearly expired visa (*Shadows*, 175).

The extract, it can be said, displays migration as a web of intersecting forces. The couple in question is forced to return back home, having made an effort to endure suffocating hours of waiting at the border. Tshuma (2012) subtly draws the reader's attention towards the home-border scenarios. It appears a demanding exercise both to cross the crocodile-infested Limpopo River and to make it through the border where you wait for an extended period to get one's passport stamped. The writer is communicating a subtle message through the young couple in "Crossroads" that is denied entry into South Africa that home is better. There is hope in being sent back home than being let into South Africa. The border could be more harrowing than the crisis at home, which migrant characters in the text are running away from. Whilst one might feel pity for the pregnant young girl, the hope is that they are still together with her husband. They are going back home not to a foreign environment. In some way, they will not survive a day longer in South Africa in their state. So, it could be divine intervention, if one looks at it from the point of view of divinity. Hardships at the border, foreshadows to migrant characters the kind of lives they are going to lead in South Africa. Evidently, the title of the short story, "Crossroads" demonstrates a myriad of challenges that intersect in characters' lives in the face of migration.

Mlalazi (2019) projects the forces inherent in undocumented migrant lives during their journeying from Bulawayo to Johannesburg. He portrays border jumping as a practice associated with its peculiar challenges on migrant characters when they cross the Limpopo River at the hands of human smugglers and guides. Moyo (2020) contends that the securitization of the border between Zimbabwe and South Africa precipitates undocumented migration which leads to human smuggling, coupled with what he describes as the attendant liminality, marginalisation, precarity and exploitation of people on the move. Implied is migrant characters' chartered existence where their survivability is brought into stasis. Within this context, Mlalazi (2019) depicts the Limpopo River as a tallstanding force to Qinisela, the chief character in the novel, and the other border jumpers he comes together with at Disaster's residence in Bulawayo. The text invites the reader to decipher Qinisela's unsettledness and his attempts to stay calm at the Limpopo River "as he struggled forward in the chest high cold water" (2) being guided by Mbedzi who works in cahoots with Disaster, the human trafficker.

Here, there is what Moyo (2018) describes as the partnership between taxi drivers who transport undocumented migrants from different locations in Zimbabwe to Beitbridge, and the guides who facilitate their way across the Limpopo River into South Africa. The

experience is frightening to Qinisela and other migrants who are crossing unconventionally to the land beyond. Qinisela finds the control by Mbedzi ultimately ushering him out of his comfort zone and they engage in a heated exchange following a "scream [that] hung over the river" (2) was heard when Mbedzi accused Qinisela to have made it. The atmosphere is apparently menacing, and Mbedzi exerts his domination over Qinisela and other border jumpers, telling them to "stop wasting time and dress up" (5) after crossing the Limpopo River. It is here that the border jumpers, under Mbedzi's guidance, are poised to move forward to reconnect with Disaster who is supposed to fetch them to Johannesburg when:

> A head count was quickly made officiated by Vusa. Two men were missing from their original thirteen, the guide included, before they had gone into the river. The one with the permed hair and the one other nobody seemed to be able to remember clearly, except for Qinisela (*The Border Jumper*, 5-6).

The passage presents how undocumented transborder migration is such a torrid undertaking. The river is a space where the existence and survival of the border jumpers are threatened and constrained. However, through resilience and good fortune, some migrants make it to the other side of the river. To demonstrate the degree of force that the Limpopo River exerts on undocumented migrants, Mbedzi callously tells the remaining border jumpers that their missing counter parts are "now fodder in some crocodile's lair […] whatever happened back there, just forget about it" (6). Here, it boggles one's mind in trying to figure out how they can possibly deter or forestall such dreadful events from taking charge of their mental faculties with the supposed ease that Mbedzi, the guide, is referring to. Human life, it seems, is turned into a nonentity by human smugglers who are interested in personal gain. The text demonstrates the complexities of undocumented migration where migrants engage in "the mad scramble through the river" (13).

Mlalazi (2019) brings to light complicit collaboration between Mbedzi, the guide, and the South African Border Patrol officials. In this case, the border jumpers fall prey to another force that impact on their existence and survival. In their endeavour to pierce their way through the bushes of South Africa after crossing the river, the group is intercepted and told not to move by "a metallic voice [that] shouted from behind the light…this is border patrol… if you move we shoot" (10). Plainly, Qinisela and other border jumpers are compelled to attend to the obstacle standing perilously in their way. Mbedzi informs them that he is known to the soldiers and all they need to do is explicitly pay for their way out. Qinisela's life is heavily encumbered by an indomitable force as Mbedzi repeatedly tells the border jumpers to

pay the "money before [their] uniformed friends change their minds" (13). My attempt here is to show how the actual movement by migrants from Zimbabwe across the borderlands into South Africa is informed by interlacing forces. In that regard, Qinisela, like other border jumpers, finds himself in an invidious position and summons his courage to pay:

> Inside the wallet was five million Zimbabwean dollars, and a single fifty rand note. He handed all the money to Mbedzi, a pain in his heart. He had hoped so much to arrive in Johannesburg with at least a little something of his own in his pocket, even though it wasn't much, and now it was all gone (*The Border Jumper*, 13 – 4).

The passage elucidates the chain of force punctuating Zimbabwean migrant lives as they traverse to the land beyond borders. Border jumpers are depicted as 'money makers' to both human smugglers and South African Border Patrol officials led by Captain Van Booma, who shares the money with Mbedzi. This, it can be stated, is done through complicit collaboration as the guides like Mbedzi intentionally pass through the places where border patrol officials are stationed. This is exemplified by Captain Van Booma who enquires from Mbedzi if "there is anybody crossing over tonight" to which he is told that there is "Moyo [who] has the biggest group, forty from two cars…and Ndou [who] has about ten or twelve" (15). Of major interest is how the agency of border jumpers is limited and they exist in manacles. They have no voice at the hands of the guides and border patrol officials, thus they are prone to exploitation, violence and powerlessness (Young, 1990). Vusa, one of the border jumpers, opens up to Qinisela when they are abode Disaster's vehicle to Johannesburg that their blockade by the border patrol "was a scam between him [Mbedzi] and them [border patrol officials] to rip [them] off" (41).

The powerlessness associated with crossing the border by migrant characters manifests in that whether one is crossing officially or by unorthodox means, they are disempowered. To be compelled to stand for hours without being attended to is plainly a rigorous undertaking. Somehow, the element of powerlessness starts by the time a migrant resolves to cross the border illicitly, putting oneself into the hands of a human trafficker. By surrendering oneself to another person – what Qinisela, Vusa and the other border jumpers do – it means you are no longer in control of your being. Powerlessness here explains the commodification of the human body in the context of human trafficking. This also applies to documented migrant characters in *Shadows* (2012) who wait for extended hours at the border for a single stamp. It tells moments where one asks themselves whether it is really worthwhile to migrate as they

tend to be powerless by being in a 'no man's land' between Zimbabwe and South Africa. Immigration officials know that characters are no longer at home and that they are homeless, hence they do whatever they deem necessary. Migrant characters in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* are deliberately disempowered to pave way for exploitation.

Mlalazi brings to light how border jumpers themselves can be menacing forces upon each other during their movement from Zimbabwe to South Africa. Vusa is involved in an altercation with his unnamed fellow border jumper inside Disaster's van. In this case, Vusa is an accomplished border jumper who "always carry[ing] a pipe [gun]" (39) and he informs Qinisela that "[he has] been living in Jozi for the past ten years" (38). His hardheartedness is revealed when he is having a friendly exchange with Qinisela in respect of their disturbing experiences across the Limpopo River, and how the money they paid border patrol officers was "peanuts" compared to "well over ten thousand rand in [his] wallet" (42). Here, Vusa shows off how he lives large in Johannesburg as a result of his criminal activities. The other border jumper reasonably interrupts and tells Vusa that the hundred rand they paid under duress to the border patrol officials is "peanuts for [Vusa] but not for some of [them]" (42). There is a demonstration of domination here, as Vusa rebukes his fellow migrant before he "suddenly jerked forward…there was the sound of a solid object thudding into flesh twice, accompanied by heavy grunts, then [Vusa] sat back again between Qinisela's legs" (42). Apparently, Vusa acts as an oppressive force upon his fellow migrant whom he attacks with a knife. From being dominated by Mbedzi and the border patrol officials, Vusa in turn dominates the already powerless unnamed border jumper. Through the chain of violence, the novel brings to light how migration as a phenomenon, an experience and a way of life is captured by Mlalazi (2019) as a web of intersecting forces that expose the migrant as the precariat.

Mlalazi (2019) signposts how Disaster, the human smuggler who "had also border jumped into South Africa twenty years earlier" (47), is perceived as a negative and of worst destructive force in the process of migration. Disaster, as his name suggests, represents the downturn and calamity on other people's lives. His lust for money turns into a senseless and insensitive monster that eliminates every obstacle in his path towards self-enrichment, "even to the cost of human lives… included herein the lives of all people who stood in his way… even his border jumping cargo" (48). My intention in this case is to bring to light how Disaster, a human trafficker, complicates the understanding of migration. His presence as a

facilitator of migrant characters' movement from the city of Bulawayo to Johannesburg is laced with lust for personal riches more than migrant lives:

> A whole load burnt to ashes in his previous van that had burst a front tyre just after Pietersburg, rolled down a steep gradient and burst into flames […] Disaster has survived the accident […] he had listened to the screams and the frantic pounding of fists from within the locked and crushed back of the fibreglass canopy for a moment, then his face assumed a steely expression…he had not informed anybody about the accident […] even the relatives of the victims […] it was a closely guarded secret (*The Border Jumper*, 48).

The excerpt invites the reader to consider transborder migration as a complicated phenomenon. It shows how migrant characters lead calculated lives during their movement between the homeland and the hostland. Mlalazi (2019) projects how human smuggling makes survivability uncertain, and creates monsters of human beings who feast on the blood and sweat of desperate others for as long as the end justifies the means.

2.4 The land beyond and 'the uncertainty of hope'[1]

The previous section focused on how documented migrant characters in *Shadows* and undocumented migrant characters in *The Border Jumper* migrate from Zimbabwe to South Africa. The section demonstrated what the characters go through after their departure from Zimbabwe and before their arrival in Johannesburg. It was established that characters face a host of interlacing challenges in their endeavour to reach the preferred destination. Borderlands stood out as forces that impact on migrant lives in peculiar ways. The section evinced the challenges faced by undocumented migrants in *The Border Jumper* under human smugglers and border patrol officers. These challenges stand as forces punctuating the existence and survivability of individual migrant characters on the move. The present section critically analyses migrant lives in Johannesburg. It documents the manner in which characters negotiate their daily means of existing and surviving in foreign spaces captured by the two texts.

Tshuma (2012) brings to light how characters exist and survive beyond borders in "Shadows", the novella in the text. Mpho, the protagonist-narrator, invites the reader to fathom the lives that Zimbabwean migrant characters lead, following his arrival in Johannesburg in pursuit of Nomsa who migrates from Bulawayo without his knowledge. The

[1] The second part of the subtitle is borrowed from Valerie Tagwira's *The Uncertainty of Hope* (2006).

reader is told how Tafi, Nomsa's cousin in Johannesburg, leads life on the margins beyond borders where he occupies "a dingy bachelor flat [which] he shares with two other men… huge, grimy sheets are draped across the room to mark respective territories" (91). Implied is what Chipo Hungwe (2015) explains as the precariousness that often characterises migrant existence. Despite being a holder of a "degree in environmental sciences", Tafi "works at a restaurant in upmarket Sandton" where he apparently toil for long hours and "comes home around midnight" (92). The reader learns, through Mpho, how Tafi no longer nurses any hopes to make use of his education for the betterment of his well-being. Evidently, life in the diaspora is pretty unbearable for Tafi who frankly opens up to Mpho that "it's just life, not fair, what can you do?" (92). Evoked through Tafi's defeatist attitude and resigned fatalism is Siziba's (2017) argument, in her projection of the unnamed protagonist-narrator in Chikwava's *Harare North* (2009). She contends that "the unnamed narrator signifies diverse forms of unsettled and precarious living conditions in London and Zimbabwe that collapse the two spaces into one zone of tension and restlessness for Zimbabweans" (Ibid: 6). Following Siziba (2017), one might argue that Tshuma (2012) depicts the intersecting forces characterising migrant lives at home and beyond borders. Tafi's experiences in Zimbabwe run parallel to what he encounters in Johannesburg. Poverty, in this case, is an emblem that follows Tafi from Bulawayo to Johannesburg. Thus, the text depicts Tafi's deplorable condition in local and foreign spaces.

Tshuma (2012) serves the reader with Tafi's liminal existence and survivability when he finds it difficult to look after Mpho and urges him to work to support himself:

> You need to find a job. It's so hard here, as you can see. You can see for yourself.
> All the stories about life being easy here, that you hear back home, they are lies,
> all lies, you see. So you must work, you must have a job (*Shadows*, 98).

The quandary that engulfs and galvanises migrant lives is undoubted. One can, therefore, read poverty as a force that encumbers characters' existence both at home and beyond borders. Poverty stands as a foe to migrant existence and efforts have to be made to hunt it down on a daily basis. In this case, Mpho explains that he becomes a burden to Tafi's well-being after he has "been [in Johannesburg for] five weeks and the strain is beginning to show on [Tafi's] face…throughout the week he has been leaving hints for [Mpho]...complaining that the soap is going too fast…the food is not enough, the space is not enough" (98). This, in effect, drives the reader towards Jacobs' (2016) thesis that *Shadows* (2012) presents 'troubled diasporic

subjects'. The land beyond borders holds heightened challenges for migrant characters and it fails to gratify and fulfil their expectations.

Tshuma (2012) depicts the nameless female narrator and Mi in "Crossroads" leading limited lives in Johannesburg. The nameless narrator, apart from the challenges she faces in Zimbabwe and at the Beitbridge border during her journeying to South Africa, is confronted with peculiar forces beyond borders. The seemingly scintillating environment in Johannesburg decorated with "wide highways that crisscross each other, elevated architecture of firm concrete [and] cheerful creativity [which] is splashed on billboards" (181) and every other beauty that initially fills the nameless narrator's heart with a renewed sensation, is quickly obliterated and replaced by a fresh sense of relentless struggle, despair and dismay. Mi's accommodation, "a single room in a conglomeration of rooms […] in a dilapidated building" (182), is an earliest pointer to the 'shackles beyond borders' for the nameless narrator. The reader is invited to perceive Mi's state of existence and the mode of her survival in the city of gold:

> So here we are. In Mi's room. There is a mattress on the floor. A two-plate stove by the corner. A freezer next to it. Clothes spilling out of a big striped plastic bag. Skirts, a bra, thongs. A man's shirt. An iron sits next to the pile of clothing (*Shadows*, 185).

It is clear to the reader, as the passage chronicles, that all is not well for Mi as a Zimbabwean migrant character in Johannesburg. The description of Mi's state of existence and survival in Johannesburg speaks to the fate of Nomsa in "Shadows" when she is in Bulawayo. Nomsa, according to Mpho's description, lives in a single room, having a two-plate stove placed in a corner and a battered suitcase and scattered clothes. This stands as Tshuma's (2012) endeavour to show the corresponding constraints between homeland and hostland. In this way, it can be argued that the forces that punctuate migrant lives at home intersect with forces informing migrant lives beyond borders. Implicit, therefore, is the text's depiction of migration as a web of intersecting forces that work against migrants – documented and/or undocumented.

The first impression that the nameless narrator sees upon her arrival in Johannesburg is not what she subsequently experiences. The infrastructural description by Tshuma (2012) is deliberate in the text. This is reminiscent of Ivan Vladislavic's preoccupation with 'city writing' in *The Exploded View* (2004). He 'explodes' the reader's perspective on the notion

of development in post-apartheid South African city where Johannesburg is depicted having patches of development and underdevelopment. The text treads the idea of housing in 'new' South Africa where Villa Toskana, an opulent northern suburb in Johannesburg, is juxtaposed with Hani View, a new location of RDP houses having poor sewage system in the east. Egan, a sanitation engineer, stays in Villa Toskana and drives through the freeway to Hani View where he makes his way through untarred roads. Both Vladislavic (2004) and Tshuma (2012) appear to shed light on the inequalities in South Africa and to debunk the myth of South Africa as an 'economic Eldorado'. Freeways in Johannesburg are entrenched in inequalities and meant to demarcate townships and informal settlements on the one hand, and opulent and rich suburbs on the other. The set-up of Sandton and Alexandra in Johannesburg exemplify this drift. Tshuma (2012), therefore, is showing that South Africa is not in any way better than the home that migrant characters are escaping from. Lurking beneath the apparent glitz and glamour of South Africa is abject poverty and glaring inequalities.

It dawns on the nameless narrator that poverty is (still) present and it pervades the land beyond borders. This is a kind of a rude awakening, the eureka moment of disillusionment that happens to migrants when they migrate with high expectations. The nameless narrator's plans and hopes of working and saving money to go to university remain enclosed in smoke. The reader is told by the nameless narrator that:

> Poverty starts to lose its glamour when you are inside the building with many rooms… This is a poverty that glitters, that is still able to smile in its quest, proclaiming that the gold is somewhere out there, it is determined to find it. It is a poverty that makes you giddy with the cheap hope it peddles (*Shadows*, 185).

The underlying drive here is that the land beyond borders is still characterised by forces of its own that militate against migrants. The nameless narrator's mention of 'gold' directs the reader's attention to Sue Nyati's *The Gold Diggers* (2018) when characters migrate from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg where they are faced with hardships. Gold digging, thus, is a metaphor of living with less while trying to make room for more. The nameless narrator has, and is forced by circumstances, to learn to live with less like what Mi's is doing. The nameless narrator is driven by the force of poverty at home and she is confronted by the same force beyond borders. Mi opens up to the hardships that Johannesburg marshals against her mode of existence and survival. She is grieved and advises the nameless narrator that:

> Things have been hard […] things around here are hard…it's hard if you don't have

> papers and you don't have money…all that crap about things being easy here that you hear back home, forget it…school and all that crap, my dear, forget it. I came here as naive as you are, with nothing but a pocketful of dreams. But look at me (*Shadows,* 185).

It can be postulated that the diaspora is represented as a space that threatens the existence of and makes survivability uncertain for both Mi and the nameless narrator as migrant characters. There is a thematic trope of hopelessness beyond borders as evidenced by Mi and Tafi. Explicitly, it is a feeling of and deja vu moment for the nameless narrator. Her endeavours to apply for a visa at the South African Embassy in Harare and to struggle to make it to Johannesburg constitute a package of effort meant to change her life. She is not able take lightly what Mi explains to her and makes an internalised disavowal that "the things [Mi is] saying, [she] don't want to hear this…it depresses [her]…this is not what [she] came [to Johannesburg] for" (185). This, I argue, is an indication of how painful Johannesburg becomes to the nameless narrator. The extent of such pain, it seems, matches the one taking toll in the homeland.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has established that Zimbabwean migration into South Africa is represented in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* as a combination of forces. It found that Zimbabwe, as home to migrant characters in the two texts, has its own forces such as poverty stemming from socio-economic downturn, government repression and violence. These forces, it has been demonstrated, act as constraints on characters' lives, resulting in their resolve to migrate to South Africa. The analysis of the two texts evinced how the movement of migrant characters from the homeland to the hostland is laced with challenges where documented migrants are forced to wait for too long hours at the Beitbridge border post to get their travelling documents verified by immigration officers; whilst undocumented migrant characters who make it through the Limpopo River are vulnerable to crocodiles and complicit collaboration between human smugglers and border patrol officials where they fall prey to extortion. The challenges that migrant characters face on the borderlines stand as a fleeting glimpse of the bigger toil they encounter in the foreign land. The predicament, it has been shown, starts way back in Zimbabwe and is exacerbated at the border before it eventually explodes in Johannesburg. The chapter underlined that undocumented migrant characters face the risk of death at the hands of merciless and selfish human smugglers whose aim is self-enrichment than the 'lives-in-transit' that they trade in. It is a finding of this chapter that

poverty continues to reign supreme in migrant lives as they realise that Johannesburg is not a place where their existence and survival can be ameliorated. The chapter, therefore, submits that Johannesburg is characterised by forces that intersect with the forces that migrant characters confront at home and during their movement to South Africa. In that regard, *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* serve the reader with an understanding of Zimbabwean migration into South Africa as a web of intersecting forces.

Chapter Three: The heterogeneity of transnational identities and subjectivities

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter offered a critical analysis of Novuyo Rosa Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012) and Christopher Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019). It was established that migration is riddled with forces informing the daily existence and survivability of would-be migrant characters in Zimbabwe, during their movement to, and upon arrival in, South Africa. The inherent question addressed in chapter 3 is how *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* problematize the understanding of identities and subjectivities in the context of migration. I explore the manner in which characters' movements in the worlds captured by the two texts are shaped by heterogeneous identities and subjectivities. My critical analysis of identity and subjectivity in this regard is guided by the motive to expose how their multiplicity inform the existence and survivability of characters. Migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe, to borrow from Chimamanda Ngozi-Adichie (TedTalk, YouTube video), are moved and shaped by multidimensional accounts. By making sense of these intricate narratives, I show how migrant characters' trajectories are punctuated by power and dominance, as they battle to exist and survive in local and foreign spaces. I focus on migrant identities and subjectivities by drawing on intersectionality theory and Amartya Sen's (2006) concept of (multiple) identities which is an eclectic key mode of understanding transnational identities and subjectivities within the realm of the selected literary texts. Not much exist in terms of literary studies that have adopted such a framework in the conceptualisation of identity and subjectivity, especially as it relates to the selected texts. I show how migrant characters' existence and survival are simultaneously shaped by multi-layered identities and subjectivities as they traverse across place, space and time. I unpack migrant characters' inhabitation of the socio-political/socio-geographical context captured by Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019).

3.2 Conceptualising identity and subjectivity in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*

Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019) project heterogeneous identities and subjectivities informing migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe. The diverse ways in which characters move through place, space and time interlink with their everyday existence and survival. In her analysis of Crenshaw's intersectional inquiry on identity politics, Jasbir Puar (2012) proposes that Crenshaw's (1989) metaphor of crossroads (traffic intersection) shows that "identification is a process; identity is an encounter, an event […] identities are multicausal,

multidirectional…" (n.p). Implied here is the dynamicity at the centre of identity that informs the existence of an individual in multiformity. The idea of identity as characterised by an event, an activity, is crucial in my critical analysis of migrant characters' identities and subjectivities in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*. I understand migrant character's agency in different spaces as instrumental in conditioning various identities and subjectivities tied to their everyday lives. There is a pointer to Sen's (2006: 18) proposition that "we are all individually involved in identities of various kinds in disparate contexts, in our respective lives, arising from our background or associations or social activities". My enterprise in this study is to expose how migrant characters' thread of existence and survival in the two texts is maintained by the different identity forms in which they exist. This is to give weight to the notion that identity is fluid and linked to social influences.

Ray Block (2006) suggests the need to distinguish identity and subjectivity to facilitate researchers' explication of their conceptual understanding of the two terms. In this study, I tread the thin line between identity and subjectivity to show their heterogeneity. Jasmine Ching Man Luk (2008) observes that "in its most basic form, identity refers to our sense of self, or who we are [whereas] subject position or subjectivity…imply agency, conscious action and authorship" (Ibid: 121 – 2). Discernible here is that to know oneself explains one's identity and how one is positioned in society or what one is subject to, explains one's subjectivity. Elspeth Probyn (1996) and Anne-Marie Fortier (2000) conceive identity construction as transition, and always producing itself through the combined processes of being and becoming, belonging and longing to belong. Highlighted is the nature of identity as an incomplete process requiring protracted validation. It is this sense of the dynamicity and ductility of identity that I explore in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*. Sanchez (2012) conceptualises subjectivity as "a cognitive, emotional, and symbolic position in front of others and in front of the social other that generates identity and, therefore, behaviour patterns" (Ibid: 159). The inherent idea on subjectivity here speaks to Luk's (2008) standpoint on identity explained above, which shows what it is that an individual is subject to. Therefore, I critically analyse the subjectivities of characters in the two texts to make sense of what they are subject to in the course of existing and surviving in and beyond Zimbabwe. The common thread in the above expressions on identity is about the outward (outer self) whereas subjectivity has to do with the inward (inner self). There is complementarity between the two notions, where externality influences internality.

Bonny Norton (2008) considers the term 'subjectivity' from its root (etymology) 'subject' in his enterprise to figure out the relational nature of identity and the different power relations these notions encapsulate. He proposes that "the use of the term 'subject' is compelling because it serves as a constant reminder that a person's identity must always be understood in relational terms: one is either subject of a set of relationships (i.e. a position of power) or subject of a set of relationships (i.e. in a position of reduced power)" (Ibid: 8). My enterprise to deconstruct migrant identities and subjectivities is aligned to the exchange between characters in the two texts. By exploring transnational identities and subjectivities in the selected texts, I evince the fashion in which the personal is attached to both the social and the political, and the way in which the social world functions. I shed light on how characters are positioned and how they self-position in local and foreign spaces depicted by the two narratives.

Crenshaw's (1989) instantiation of intersectionality arrows to a situation where a single individual is made up of interconnected social identities that intersect at distinct contexts, ideologies and time periods which condition the person's navigation of space. The interplay between identities demonstrates how identity is not static and immutable in its pureness. Identity is prone to change and intersectionality attempts to provide a holistic account of a person whose subjectivities are shaped by diverse discourses and these are always situated in a specific socio-historical context (Sarah F. Aziz, 2012; Anastasia Vakulenko, 2007). The multiplicity of identities and subjectivities of migrant characters in Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi's (2019) texts evokes Sen's (2006) thesis that there exist a variety of identity categories to which individuals, as social beings, simultaneously belong.

The notion of migrant identities and how it relates to subjectivities is documented in existing scholarship. These studies reflect on identity and subjectivity from anthropology, sociology and literary studies perspective. Hazel Easthope (2009) explores identity construction in the context of return migration among Australians living in Tasmania. She brings into view the manner in which mobility and place are central to identity formation. Attending to the same line of thought, Dobrota Pucherova (2015) draws on Achille Mbembe's (2001) idea of the Postcolony to interrogate the postcolonial subject in Brian Chikwava's (2009) *Harare North*. The study chronicles how characters in the text, as Zimbabweans migrants in London, are informed by fragmented identities. Elsewhere, Isaac Ndlovu (2016) examines the representation of African crises, migration and identity in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* (2013). He evinces how Bulawayo, a diasporic writer, presents precarious

mobilities and construct identities that, at the same time, repudiate and affirm attachment to African origins. In the same vein, Maria Eugenia Sanchez (2012) depicts subjectivity and intersubjective relations involved in the migration process. She problematizes border crossing and documents the fashion in which Mexican migrants' subjectivities and social identities are destructured and reconfigured at the United States and Mexico border. Correspondingly, Johan Jacobs (2016) observes the concept of diaspora and how it complicates the understanding of identity in Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012). He enlightens the point that Zimbabwean migrant characters in the text are projected as troubled diasporic subjects in Johannesburg.

3.3 Deconstructing the 'transnational migrant' as an individual

The previous section conceptualised identity and subjectivity as the skeletal frames scaffolding the focus of this chapter. The two terms were defined and discussed in relation to the theory of intersectionality and the concept of identity. This section offers a nuanced analysis of particular identities and subjectivities informing migrant lives in local and foreign spaces captured by Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019). I demonstrate the diverse forms in which migrant characters exist and make sense of themselves.

Qinisela in *The Border Jumper* (2019) is moved and engaged by various identities as he navigates through the foreign space. An irregular migrant, he arrives in Johannesburg with the assistance of Disaster, the human trafficker who drops him off at his destination at 3: 00 am. Here, Qinisela embodies a tag of difference in this 'new' place which becomes vivid to him the moment he is attacked and mugged by street kids who find him wandering at the false address that Prince Siwela, his friend, had served him with prior to his departure for Johannesburg. One of the street kids ushers Qinisela out of the world of fantasy to reality:

> That door you are knocking on […] is the door of Johannesburg Post office,
> and with your accent, I can tell you have just landed from Zimbagwe …you
> are not the first one to land this way from Zimbagwe (*The Border Jumper*, 59).

Implied in this excerpt is the challenge of Qinisela's identity, his self and very being, by virtue of his presence in a different environment. Language and place, in this case, inform Qinisela's existence in Johannesburg where he tries to belong. The street kid's informative but disturbing gesture enlightens a moment in time when Qinisela is forced to assume a certain subject position. He is compelled to consider his positionality in this foreign space against his nationality.

Despite Qinisela's expectations and endeavour for new beginnings, he is interpellated and is subject to street kids who, in this case, are citizens. Qinisela is ultimately hailed by xenophobic discourse in being told of his nonbelonging status: "Wake up *mkwerekwere,* this is Jozi" [Italics in the original] (60). This brings to mind David Matsinhe's documentation of the ideology of Makwerekwere and what he describes as 'Africa's fear of itself'. Fear in this context speaks to Sarah Ahmed's (2004) notion of 'fear economies' as part of a disciplinary regime of the other. Matsinhe explains that "since the collapse of apartheid, the figure of Makwerekwere has been constructed and deployed in South Africa to render Africans from outside the borders orderable as the nation's bogeyman" (Ibid: 295). This evokes Chris Barker's (2008) observation, following Michel Foucault (1978), that one's identity is thus the product of history and power. The notion of Makwerekwere is portrayed in the text as a tool for constructing Qinisela's identity as an outsider in Johannesburg. Hate and distrust are, therefore, tenets of such exclusion.

Elsewhere in the novel, Qinisela is stereotyped by Mkhize as "*Kwerekwere*" [Italics in the original] (84) after the latter's grasp of the former's Ndebele accent. Hlongwane, Qinisela's interlocutor in this scenario, debunks Mkhize's exclusionary sentiments and links Makwerekwere to migrants from Malawi and Zambia and not Zimbabwe. This calls upon Thulani Angoma-Mzini's (2020) standpoint where he describes the discourse of Makwerekwere as the social corruption underlying the giving of geographic spaces nationalistic code names. Such a stereotypical enterprise is documented by Ndesanjo Macha (2008) in his interest to understand the meaning of Makwerekwere. He explains it as a slang lexicon used to refer to foreigners and especially illegal migrants in South Africa. This brings to light issues to do with the politics of belonging, inclusion and exclusion. Makwerekwere in this sense constitutes a transnational identity which Qinisela automatically assumes as a result of his presence in a foreign space.

Apparently, Qinisela understands his marginal existence in a foreign space when he feels unwelcoming. He is subject to two life-threatening incidents involving aggressive street kids and an unnamed male character who wields a Rambo knife against him. Qinisela craves for company when he finds himself in the middle of a modern jungle called Johannesburg where incidences of violence constitute his welcome. Hence, Qinisela is cognisant of his position and is forced into a stream of consciousness:

> And you Prince my friend, why did you send me a Post Office number? Where are

> you right now? I need you man, to give me the correct address again so I can go to the right place and be with you, so you can assist me find a job in this city and live like a proper man, and not what is happening to me right now (*The Border Jumper*, 65).

Discernible in the desperate appeal is a haunting hostland where Qinisela finds his existence bleak and having limited chances for survival. Qinisela is subject to himself and the Post Office here symbolises his relentless mobility where, like letters, he is posted from one place to another. Qinisela has not arrived yet, thus, he is to be posted elsewhere. In this instance, Qinisela not only understands himself as an undocumented foreign national, but homeless by virtue of not having a place of abode and an unemployed figure with high hopes to change his fate. These identities intersect on Qinisela and his subject position tells of powerlessness and vulnerability.

Qinisela exists in the fringes as a migrant character in South Africa. He has no shoulder to lean on, without anywhere to sleep and without anything to eat. This brings to mind Lucky Dube's song "Remember Me", which explains Qinisela's precarity where he wanders up and down the streets of Johannesburg without a place to call his home. It is a period where everything is seemingly fuzzy and he is overwhelmed and burdened by the weight of his existence. Undocumented as he is, everything is alien and Qinisela cogitates on his belonging to this foreign soil: "[He] contemplate[s] on his plight, what to do now, but his weary mind refused to travel along that frightful avenue that looked like a big empty hole with no solution nowhere in sight near it" (81). Plainly, Qinisela is conscious of his being and he tries to exercise his agency. It is a moment that calls for redemptive action to change his fate which he understands to be on the doldrums. The presence of homeless individuals instils a sense of instability on Qinisela's whole self: Thus, he wails:

> Was this what he had been also reduced to? A vagrant? Lord have mercy on me. This is not what I came to this city for. At home I was near a vagrant, and please not here too. This is Egoli, the city of Gold, where people realise their dreams and go back home to Zimbabwe stinking with rich and their skins looking soft from good living and saying '*mara*' [Italics in the original] (*The Border Jumper*, 81).

Implied here is the depiction of transborder migration as 'a web of intersecting forces', an idea I discussed in chapter 2. The reader is served with a picture of a haunting homeland and a menacing hostland. Qinisela's desire for diasporic achievements is reminiscent of the nameless protagonist-narrator in Chikwava's *Harare North* (2009), whose lustful wish is to

make the best in London so that he will have something to show when he goes back to Zimbabwe. It dawns on Qinisela that both the homeland and hostland are not accommodative. He deconstructs his existence as a vagrant, apart from being an irregular migrant who border jumps into South Africa. He is subject to poverty as opposed to his sustained wish to thrive and become a better person in Johannesburg. This, it can be argued, enlightens Qinisela's movement around the social world of the text embodying different identities and subjectivities.

Mlalazi (2019) brings to light how Qinisela's sense of self mutates in Johannesburg. In his attempt to survive, Qinisela goes to Savannah Disco nightclub where he finds revellers enjoying their best moments. Having no money and fully aware of his precarity, Qinisela spots an "unoccupied table and, without breaking a stride, or blinking an eyelid, he casually reached over and picked up a full unopened bottle of beer from it, his hand shielded from the dance floor by the bulk of his body' (74). Qinisela in this scenario develops a thievery character as part of his identity, an identity attached to a role (activity) (Luk, 2008) which is demonstrative of what Qinisela is doing. It is in Savannah Disco nightclub where Qinisela meets Natasha, a prostitute, and where "Qinisela was thinking fast…a place to sleep if he handled it right" (75). Qinisela lies to Natasha that he is Quincy Jackson, a Jamaican singer: "I man from *Jumeca*…I man play bass guitar for de raga group call Natty I, and we here in South Africa for de Jo'burg reggae Sun splash tomorrow afternoon" (75). The text here demonstrates identity fluidity and the fashion in which Qinisela is simultaneously moved and engaged by multiple identities (Sen, 2006). Following Pfalzgraf (2022), Qinisela flexibly transcends borders of language and identity. He is a border jumper, homeless, a thief and a singer – identities which are tied to his existence and survival.

Qinisela finds himself at OK supermarket where he attempts and fails to shoplift a "tin of corned beef…his hand reached out and took it" (98). He is caught by the shop assistant, Linda, the moment he is contemplating on how to steal the product. It is in these circumstances that Qinisela is forced into pickpocketing. His desire to survive drives him towards an old white woman whom he witnesses buying groceries at OK supermarket. She becomes a palatable fodder as "Qinisela appeared from nowhere in the close tide of the pavement crowds and bumped hard into [the old woman] with all his strength, weak as he was, and gripped her handbag with his right hand" (99). Away from home and in the jaws of poverty, Qinisela, a Zimbabwean-turned Jamaican musician, employs unorthodox means for survival in Johannesburg. Hence, Judith Butler's (1990) proposition that identity is

performatively constituted. Qinisela's plural identities bring into view Luk's (2008) argument that an individual's identities can be achieved, transformed, subverted and negotiated across time and space.

Additionally, Mlalazi (2019) projects Vusa as a border jumper who straddles between Zimbabwe and South Africa. He is a heartless killer who is "always carrying a pipe" which Qinisela discovers to be "a gun!" (39 – 40). Vusa travels from Johannesburg to his rural home in Nkayi where he murders a "country school teacher" (40) for an alleged illicit affair with his brother's wife in his absence. Vusa surreptitiously visits his home area when "no one knew I was around, I made sure of that, not even [his] own parents" (43). Vusa's masking up of his identity evokes Sen's (2006) proposition that the importance of a particular identity depends on the social context. Here, Vusa covertly negotiates his identity as a murderer to fulfil his desired task. He describes to Qinisela how he killed his victim: "The teacher was smoking a cigarette…in the darkness, [he] asked him for a light, and he fell for it…when he got nearer, [he] gave him one [bullet at] the centre of his forehead" (44). Vusa is mindful of his movement in the social world captured by the text and it is through choice and context (Sen, 2006) that the reader discerns his role as a murderer.

Vusa has a "criminal inclination" (64) and his existence and survivability as a migrant character are attached to what Pfalzgraf (2022) describes as 'Johannesburg's criminal underworld'. Following their accidental reunion with Qinisela at Subterrania Nightclub in Hillbrow, Vusa introduces him to Gasa and Kurt: "[These are] the cowboys I survive with here in Jozi, *ogazi*" [Italics in the original] (135). Vusa, Gasa and Kurt have criminality as part of their existence and survivability – it is their modus operandi. It is this world of criminality, a world characterised by the use of guns, that Qinisela is introduced to through Gasa who reflects on the not-so-good state of affairs in Zimbabwe, a force behind mass out-migration into South Africa and elsewhere: "You Zimbabweans are too good for nothing… carry a mother fucking gun…it's not movie stuff but reality…anything moves across your path you shoot down and build yourself an empire" (136). Implied here is Gasa's challenging of Vusa and Qinisela's identities as peace-loving citizens, which is what Zimbabweans are known for. Vusa is instructed by Gasa and Kurt to superintend over Qinisela whom Gasa plainly advises that "you need a gun. The text here invites the reader to Michel Foucault's (1977) idea on the moments when subjectivities are imposed upon individuals. This explains Qinisela's situation when "Gasa's words about guns had left him feeling a bit uneasy" (136). To borrow from W.E.B. Dubois (2006), Qinisela finds himself in double-consciousness. He

wants to belong to the cowboys group and at the same time, he does not want to get himself involved in criminality and its trademark of guns.

Vusa exists and survives in the foreign space as Sergeant Khumalo, a police officer in Johannesburg Central. It is when they are at a drinking spree at Subterrania Nightclub where Gasa informs his colleagues that "I am running low on cash…let's visit an ATM" (137). The analogy of an ATM here indicates one of their merciless criminal operations when they mug and rob individuals who walk around the city during late hours. Vusa and his crew, with complete knowledge of the space they operate in, park their BMW in a street in Central Johannesburg. Vusa momentarily subverts the identity of an armed criminal and becomes a police officer "when a man walked past the car" (143). It is here that Qinisela gets to know more about Vusa and how he leads his life in the world of the text:

> Police! He heard Vusa bark, and he caught his breadth as Vusa flashed something that Qinisela knew very well at the man's face. A police badge (*The Border Jumper,* 143).

Evident here is the paradox of fluid identity that straddles not only national borders but also borders of identity. Vusa assumes the identity of a police officer and employs the same identity to commit crime. Apart from being a border jumper, a murderer and a criminal, Vusa exists and survives as a police officer. In that sense, he takes up an interrogative role and demands his victim's identification details who subsequently fails to produce his identity book and lies that he comes from KwaMashu in Natal. It is after Vusa's torturous temperament who "rocked the man with a hard slap to the face" (144) that the victim discloses that "please don't arrest me… I am from Mozambique" (145). There is an indication of 'identity theft' here through the Mozambican migrant character, whom Vusa angrily instructs to "shut up *Mshangane*" [Italics in the original] (145). The unnamed Mozambican migrant character identifies himself as a South African of Zulu ethnic group – a ploy to survive before he gets robbed of his wallet with "eight hundred rand" (147).

Identity theft is a notion prevalent in, and constitutes, transnational identities. Vusa too, assumes a borrowed and stolen identity when he uses a police badge which he tells Qinisela that Gasa took it "off a dead cop" (148). There is a pointer to the relationship between fluid of identity, violence and criminality as modes of survival in new and foreign spaces. This speaks to transnational identities and resonant of the nameless protagonist narrator in *Harare North* (2009) who steals his friend Shingi's passport, work permit, clothes and mobile phones and in the process, adopting his identity. This evokes Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* as Zimbabwe

and South Africa are like 'war zones' when it comes to this fluidity of identities, where a person has to assume a particular identity depending on place, space and time. In substantiating Sun Tzu's ideas, Gerald Michaelson and Steven Michaelson (2003) reveal how one can use *The Art of War* to master challenges and accomplish their desired goals. As the authors show, strategy before tactics and knowing one's battleground are the central tenets to success. Strategy and the knowledge of the environment in which one operates is what the reader sees in the existence and survivability of Mlalazi's (2019) migrant characters. The various identities that Vusa, Qinisela, Gasa and Kurt assume are driven by strategy and complete know-how of Johannesburg, the space they operate in. There is demonstration of how (migrant) characters in *The Border Jumper* (2019) are both troubled and troubling in nature (Jacobs, 2016). Stealing police officers' identities yet they are diasporic subjects coupled with migrant illegality indicate their troubled and troubling temperament. There is also agency in that they have mastered and mustered the environment by recreating it and making it their own. Shaped by the hostile environment, they adapt and shape and control the environment and feed on and from it.

Vusa exists and survives in Johannesburg as a gold dealer with Gasa and Kurt "his partners in crime" (108). They work in tandem with Madam Valerie, a businesswoman who operates a massage parlour in Kempton Park where she also conducts gold dealing. Here, Vusa and Kurt are described by Madam Valerie as "dangerous…very dangerous…as long as I am around nothing is going to happen" (117) in an attempt to entice Bruno Strydom, a wealthy business, into gold dealing. Bruno is subsequently cornered, swindled and killed despite his remark to Madam Valerie that Kurt and Vusa "look dangerous" (117), putting emphasis on Vusa's perceived degree of lethality, "especially that silent black one" (117". My attempt here is to shed light on identities and subjectivities attached to Vusa's movement in the social world of the text. Despite Vusa's presence at Madam Valerie's place as a gold dealer, Bruno evidently identifies him as a criminal at first sight. This substantiates the crossroads of identities (Crenshaw, 1989/1991) where an individual exists in multiformity, and Sen's (2006) observation that an individual negotiates different affiliations which vary according to place, space and time.

Mlalazi (2019) presents Disaster existing and surviving as a polymorphic migrant character in Johannesburg. A human trafficker with "no qualms about doing anything illegal" (47), Disaster transports human cargo from Bulawayo to Johannesburg, a business which is a "tricky one, but lucrative too" (47). Apart from being a human smuggler, Disaster is

represented as a seasoned thief whose presence in South Africa is cushioned by money realised from "stealing cars with accomplices who were all now either dead or doing long stretches in jail" (47). The reader is invited to fathom Disaster's flinty-heartedness in his pursuit for riches as a transnational character, where he wants to remain financially stable "at all costs…even to the cost of human lives" (48). Disaster is subject to greediness and his agency in pursuing such a goal sees his involvement in an inferno where his vehicle carrying border jumpers catches fire in Pietersburg on his way to Johannesburg. In this scenario, Disaster "had watched the van being swallowed by the fire…his face had assumed a steely expression" before he disappeared "into the dark bushes at the bottom of the gradient away from the accident" (48). The text here directs the reader towards Disaster's mind where he is subject to himself. He cannot do anything to save the lives in danger but chooses to follow his heartlessness as a psychopath.

Disaster's movement around the social world captured by Mlalazi (2019) is informed by his criminal behaviour and an all-rounder personality. His lustful financial pursuits in Johannesburg unknowingly takes him across Gasa, Kurt, Vusa and Qinisela's path, a group of armed-to-the-teeth criminals and serial killers. This is after Gasa's girlfriend, Thandi, double crosses him with Disaster. Thandi, who "works as a maid for a Chinese couple in Yeoville" discovers "money hidden in the house" (172) and alerts Gasa and his group before secretly involving Disaster into the same criminal activity. Criminality, one might argue, is a pervading transnational identity that informs Disaster, Vusa and Qinisela's modes of existing and surviving as migrant characters in Johannesburg. It is during the gun-cushioned criminal activity that Qinisela is nonplussed to see Disaster. Hence, Qinisela notices that:

> A man was halfway out of a bench beside a bed, a machete in his hand. Qinisela gasped in surprise. It was Disaster, the human trafficker who had brought him into South Africa from Zimbabwe (*The Border Jumper*, 184).

Qinisela's moments of bewilderment substantiates "the diverse categories to each of which an individual simultaneously belong" (Sen, 2006: 19). Disaster's identities vary and he negotiates the social space in different forms as a survival strategy.

As a novice in this criminal behaviour, Qinisela witnesses Disaster's painful death: "[Kurt's] flick knife sank deep into Disaster's left breast" before he wipes "the blade of his knife on Disaster's hair" (185). Being enmeshed in these criminal activities, Qinisela is part of but apart from them. This paradoxical standpoint sheds light on his subject position:

> His mind was made up. He could not go on with this anymore. He had seen six people killed in one night, and he was also part of it. He was going to use his share of the money to disappear, go someplace far away from Johannesburg and start afresh – he was going back home, he was going to Zimbabwe (*The Border Jumper,* 194)

Pellucid in Qinisela's unspoken thoughts in this extract is return migration. Mlalazi (2019) here appears to question the reality and possibility of return migration. The author interrogates migrants' resolve to go back home and whether they would have found what they are looking for. In this regard, Qinisela seems to be pursuing an elusive dream which keeps moving away when he arrives in the host country. This speaks to Qinisela's existence and survivability in Johannesburg informed by endless mobility where he is posted from one place to another until he nurses the possibility of returning to Zimbabwe. Qinisela's decision to go back to Zimbabwe brings to light his endeavour to ward off the criminal sense and regain his old self. This substantiates how subjectivities and social identities are destructured and reconfigured in migratory process (Sanchez, 2012).

Correspondingly, Tshuma (2012) projects the complexity inherent in transnational identities through Mpho in "Shadows". From being an artist in Zimbabwe, Mpho turns into an undocumented migrant roaming the streets of Johannesburg, a migrant-infested place where "they love us here…how they hate us here…too many of us desperate here" (96). Highlighted is a paradoxical space where Mpho feels subject to and ponders his identity:

> You pick through the threads of your identity. What is it to be Zimbabwean in this place? To be an Ndebele Zimbabwean in this place? You reach far back into the past and trace your origins back to this space that is now South Africa. Way back, way before King Mzilikazi broke away from Shaka Zulu and herded his people into Matabeleland in today's Zimbabwe. Oh, history is so cruel. Why didn't King Mzilikazi just stay put in South Africa? But. But but *but* [italics in the original]
>
> (*Shadows*, 96).

This excerpt demonstrates the politics of identity and belonging. It underscores the place and effect of history in identity construction and the power relations involved therein. This echoes Mbembe's (2001: 26) proposition that "there is no identity that does not in some way lead to questions about origins and attachment to them". Mpho has a desire to belong to a place that does not approve of his presence and he concedes that "nobody wants us here" (96).

Existing as a rootless figure, Mpho curses history in the process of trying to deconstruct his identity. He is conscious of his existence in the foreign space where he has "been told to run and not run", thus he is subject to "immobility" (97). Demonstrated here is self-imposed slavery in which characters wilfully migrate from the homeland to the hostland where their existence and survival are limited. Zygmunt Bauman (2007: 163) asserts that "identity is a concept heatedly questioned [and] whenever you hear that word, you can be certain that there is a battle underway". This brings to mind how individuals engage and are engaged by identities in complex ways. In this respect, identities are not straightforward and cannot be put in neat boxes. Mpho's lament, revulsion of home (Zimbabwe) and a curse of history and emotional attachment to the hostland (South Africa) is reminiscent of Lucifer Mandengu, the protagonist in Charles Mungoshi's (1977) *Waiting for the Rain* who wails:

> I am Lucifer Mandengu. I was born here against my will. I should have been born elsewhere – of some other parents. I have never liked it here, and I never shall and if ever I leave this place, I am not going to come back. It is the failure's junk heap. Those who go to the towns only come back to die. Home is a place where you come back to die (*Waiting for the Rain*, 53).

One might contend that parallels could be drawn here between Lucifer's bemoaning and Mpho's lament. They both have an unsettling sense of home and the existence of the pair is characterised by what Nyanda and Makuyana (2020 posit as home-phobia and flight which is a recurring trope in Zimbabwean literature. Home-phobia and flight in the context of migration brings to light what Pucherova (2015), in describing characters in Chikwava's *Harare North*, signposts as "voided multiple and split identities" (Ibid: 8). This shines light on the foregoing discussion on the heterogeneity of transnational identities and subjectivities moving and shaping existence and survivability of characters in Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi's (2019) texts.

Tshuma (2012) projects the manner in which transborder migration facilitates multiplicious identities and subjectivities. The nameless female protagonist-narrator in "Crossroads" explicates on how language is linked to identity when she reunites with Mi in Johannesburg:

> I spoke in Ndebele. She responded in Ndebele-Zulu peppered with a Zulu accent, punctuated with neh, neh, neh. I wanted to say, "Hey! It's me! You don't have to pretend, it's all right". But I sensed the gulf that had suddenly appeared between us. A place can change a person. But that is what we came here for, isn't? To find new selves, reinvent ourselves (*Shadows*, 183).

The idea of reinvention of the self being communicated in this passage speaks to the impact of mobility and place in identity construction (Easthope, 2009). There is also a pointer to the relationship between language and identity. Language in this sense constitutes what Bourdieu (1977) refers to as cultural capital where culture is central to one's identity. In his endeavour to decolonise the mind, Ngugi WaThiong'o (1986) observes that to speak a language points to one's assumption of a culture. Mi is transformed by virtue of migrating from Zimbabwe to South Africa. It is in this socio-geographic context where transnational identities and subjectivities are constructed and understood. Mi's exposure and use of the Zulu language can therefore be perceived as a constituent of her new found identity that is responding to the environment.

3.4 Conclusion

The chapter critically disentangled the transborder migrant as an individual to understand how identity and subjectivity are linked to their existence and survivability. It has emerged that migrant characters in the selected texts are moved and engaged by heterogeneous identities and subjectivities which they (consciously) negotiate in local and foreign spaces. The varied forms in which characters exist and survive confirm that "construction of identity is […] an individual project [where] individuals carry the responsibility for making their lives work" (Robert G. White & Johanna Wyn, 2004: 184). The analysis of *The Border Jumper* showed how characters like Qinisela, Vusa and Disaster are constantly engaged and engaging with different identities and subjectivities as they navigate different spaces in Zimbabwe and South Africa. In *Shadows*, it was shown how Mpho is engaged in an attempt to redefine his identity and subjectivity when he finds himself in unwelcoming and menacing spaces of Johannesburg. The chapter, therefore, concludes that identities of characters in the two texts are made sense of as outward oriented, being linked to social influences; whilst subjectivities are perceived as inward-oriented, being linked to the cognitive aspects where characters are conscious to how they inhabit spaces captured by Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019).

Chapter Four: The interaction between the psyche and the social in migrant lives

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on Novuyo Rosa Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012) and Christopher Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019). It established that characters' beinghood and trend of survival in the homeland and hostland are punctuated by multifarious identities and subjectivities relatable to place, space, time and context. In this chapter, I offer a critical analysis of *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*. The inherent question I address in chapter 4 is how the two texts portray the psychosocial dimension as a constituent of migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe. In pursuit of such a focus, I expose how migrant characters' modes of existing and surviving are shaped by both the state of mind and behaviour, and exposure to the social context in which they find themselves in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Through migrant characters' navigation of social space in the homeland and hostland depicted by

Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019), they stand as the "point where lines meet […] a meeting point [which] becomes a sore point" (Sarah Ahmed, 2009: 42). This enlightens an intersectional feature which is emblematic of the individual migrant character in the selected texts. I focus on the nexus between the psyche and the social in migrant lives by drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus. There appears to be a paucity of literary studies focusing on the psychosocial aspects of migration drawing on the framework of intersectionality, especially as it relates to the selected literary texts. Consequently, I show that the migrant character's 'body' accommodates, and is in turn conditioned by, the mind which shapes the body's mode of existing and surviving. It is the same body that is exposed to the social world and its related forces which govern the body's terrestrial state. ___

4.2 Conceptualising psychic and social aspects in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*

The representation of migrant characters in Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi's (2019) texts takes on board psychosocial aspects. Migrant characters' existence and survivability in the worlds captured by the two writers are attached to the mental state (the psyche) and the society in which they are located (the social). This brings into focus the idea of the psychosocial which forms the basis for my critical analysis of migrant lives in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*. Diane Reay (2015) explains the psychosocial study as inquiry into the mutual constitution of the individual and the social relations within which they are enmeshed. Mpho in "Shadows", a novella in Tshuma's *Shadows*, for example, is portrayed as a migrant character having a troubled mental state in Johannesburg following his impromptu movement from Bulawayo. His attempts to lure Nomsa back are futile and he is overwhelmed by the foreign space in which Nomsa is located. As a returned migrant, Mpho is arrested and imprisoned by the police in Zimbabwe for alleged treason. He is tortured by Sam, the detective, who goes as far as orienting Mpho on how to think and what to speak. This highlights Mpho's mode of being, what Bourdieu (1977) describes as habitus. Mpho is subject to psychological and social restrictions as a former migrant character in his homeland.

In explicating his concept of habitus, Bourdieu (1977: 76) states that it denotes "the creation of a continuous interplay of individuals' freewill and the socially-rooted constraints they face […] everyone's life is inevitably shaped by historical events and everyday experiences and realities". The implied oppression sheds light on the motive of this chapter which is on critical engagement with the two texts to expose migrant characters' navigation of local and foreign spaces. Following Karl Maton's (2008: 52) validation of Bourdieu's (1977) concept

of habitus, I critically analyse migrant characters' "ways of acting, […] thinking and being… [and why they] make choices to act in certain ways and not others". The modes of being for two minor twin sisters in *The Border Jumper*, for instance, is hampered after they unconventionally migrate from Bulawayo to Johannesburg where they fail to locate their brother. The sexual abuse and hostage they suffer at Disaster's hands is testament to what Bourdieu (1977: 76) describes as "the socially-rooted constraints" which limit their existence and make survival in the hostland uncertain.

My sustained effort in this chapter is to expose how the psyche and the social feeds into each other in moving and shaping migrant character's sense of self, deportment and the relationships that they share in the homeland and the hostland. This brings into view Wendy Hollway's (2006) deconstruction of the psychosocial. She rightly observes that the term explains an "intellectual project to understand the mutual effectivity of psychological and social realms in the production of identity, action and relating" (Ibid: 15). Focus on the nexus between the psychic and social aspects allows this study to expose how they are part and parcel of migrant lives in the selected texts.

The concept of habitus facilitates my critical engagement with migrant characters' "conditions of existence, […] [their] perceptions [and] feelings" (Maton, 2008: 53) in local and foreign spaces captured by Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019). The nameless female protagonist-narrator in "You in Paradise", a short story in *Shadows* (2012), for example, finds Johannesburg a constricting social space marred with fear-inducing xenophobic threats. Terrified and petrified, she spends a month locked up in Aunt Ntombi's room. Habitus (Bourdieu, 1977), as a result, offers a leeway to understanding the nameless narrator's perception of her existence in the hostland and the social context she finds herself in. This serves the reader with the nameless narrator's "socialised subjectivity" characterised by a nerve-racking disposition (Ibid: 72). Following Frantz Fanon's (1986) notion of internalisation, the existence and survivability of the nameless female protagonist-narrator in Johannesburg are hinged on internalised fear. Demonstrated, thus, is the imbrication of the individual and the social world in which they are located.

In substantiating the particulars of the concept of habitus, Maton (2008: 52) surmises that "it is a key part of Bourdieu's lens through which he sees the social world […] [and it is] underpinned by a relational mode of thought". Relationality, in this regard, enlightens my endeavour to expose how psychic and social aspects constitute migrant lives in *Shadows* and

The Border Jumper. The complementarity between the psyche and the social brings to light Derek Hook's (2004a: 101) contention that "internal psychological processes therefore cannot be divorced from their social context; even the contents of the unconscious mind, of dreams [and] fantasies […] are supplied by the social, historical and political location of individuals". Therefore, I make sense of the daily existence and survivability of individual migrant characters in Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi's (2019) texts as an "interface between the psychological and the social" (Simon Winlow and Steve Hall, 2009: 10).

The notion of the psychosocial is captured in extant scholarship. These studies attend to the relationship between the psyche and the social from psychology, sociology and medical studies perspective. Reay (2015) offers a psychosocial reading of Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus in her attempt to demonstrate the nexus between psychic and social aspects of living in an unequal society. She brings to light how habitus incorporates the affective aspects of human life. The author suggests that the concept of habitus provides a platform to make sense of the psychosocial. Reay (2015) presents a qualitative study on middle-class tales to advance the idea that the experience of living class in a lopsided society such as the United Kingdom can be perceived as a defended and defensive manner of existence. Correspondingly, Wendy Hollway and Lynn Froggett (2013) explore the psychosocial and situate their study in what they describe as 'in-between subjective experience and reality'. They propose that psychosocial research serves to look into ways of understanding which transcend psychological or social explanations, without uncritically locating these in the individual or society, or internal and external. The authors advance the contention that subjective experience can be perceived as simultaneously individual embodied, relational as well as social. Elsewhere, Souvik Dubey et al. (2020) examine the psychosocial impact of COVID-19 pandemic. They point out that the untimely emergency of the disease brought about universal psychosocial impact by engendering mass hysteria and economic burden coupled with financial losses. The study demonstrates how the coronavirus pandemic has caused extensive fear (coronaphobia), psychosocial burden of quarantine and isolation. The study brings to light outbursts of racism, stigmatization and xenophobia perpetrated against particular communities as social ills birthed by the emergency of the coronavirus disease.

4.3 The migrant (body) in space: A zone where lines converge

In the previous section, I conceptualised and demonstrated my intention to analyse the creative literary works under study from a psychosocial lens. I defined and explicated the

dual nature of the psychosocial dimension which is driven by psychic and social aspects. Substantiation of the psychosocial was done in relation to the concept of habitus guiding analysis in this chapter, supplemented by critical references to the primary texts. This section offers an expansive critical analysis of how migrant lives both in Zimbabwe and South Africa are informed by psychic and social elements. It considers the transnational migrant as an area of influence – a zone where psychic and social lines crisscross.

Nomsa, a migrant character in the novella titled "Shadows" in Tshuma's collection *Shadows* (2012), is represented as a female migrant figure battling to eke a living in a socially hostile, economically unfriendly, and politically impenetrable foreign environment. Nomsa exists in quandary at home and she is driven by poverty from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg where she fares as a stripper at "Lollipop Lounge" (99). It is from Mpho's vantage point that the reader is drawn towards the particulars of Nomsa's mode of existence and survivability in the land beyond the borders:

> She arches her back, leans away from the pole she is holding on to. Her breasts jiggle, they're bare. There is a group of men sitting around the pole; balding white men, red-faced from the exertion of watching her. They whistle and cheer. They tuck hundred-rand notes into her G-string. She giggles (*Shadows*, 99).

Apparent in this passage is how place, space and time alter a person, an idea I discussed in chapter 3 of this study. It is the foreign environment in which Nomsa is located that transmogrifies her. In this regard, one might argue that Nomsa's new trade as a stripper, gives her more control of her body as she goes against the norm that demands she covers her body. Being a stripper affords Nomsa power as she is able to control men who drool at her body. It is the emplacement of Nomsa's body at Lollipop Lounge where her mode of surviving is attached to. Mpho's chagrin and attempts to bar Nomsa from conducting her trade gets him into trouble when he is violently strangled by Nomsa's male audience. His "body is lifted off the ground and slammed against the wall" before he is violently cast off "on the street" (99). Nomsa's condition here speaks to the commercialisation of a woman's body where she is recruited by Mr du Plessis who introduces her to "his friend, who owns a strip club" (104). Mpho and Nomsa's modes of being and surviving in the hostland are characterised by limited freewill. This demonstrates the shackles attending to their movement in the social world captured by Tshuma (2012).

The reader is invited to discern how Johannesburg, as a social context with constraints of its own, impacts on Nomsa's psychological makeup where her "way[s] of acting, feeling, thinking and being" (Maton, 2008: 50) are entrapped. Gestured at here is the interplay between the psyche and the social where the material body is a site of contest. Nomsa feels that her body does not belong to the foreign space in which she finds herself. She does not hide what she feels about her existence in Johannesburg to Mpho whom she plainly advises that "I hate this street" (101). The reader is drawn towards Nomsa's disposition which, as Bourdieu (1977) puts it, "designates a way of being, a habitual state (especially of the body) and in particular […] tendency, propensity or inclination" (Ibid: 214). This explains Nomsa's distress and anguish where she explains that "so many things have happened to me in this street" (101). Nomsa's emphasis in mentioning the street, it can be argued, is akin to the Biblical Calvary, a place of suffering. The street is perceived as the social context where Nomsa's existence and survival are limited. The street orients the reader towards Nomsa's fractured psyche. Hence, she confesses:

> I am walking down the street one day…a police truck comes past…it is a hot day and there's so much noise on the streets. I am feeling exposed. Sweat is dribbling down my face, making the space between my breasts itchy (*Shadows*, 101 – 2).

The passage highlights how the migrant body is located in space. At the psychic level, there is a sense of unhomeliness underlying Nomsa's existence. Her apparent sense of unhomeliness evokes Donna Haraway's (1985: 8) contention that as human bodies "we are enmeshed in forces [and] affects…" This communicates the complex nature of the human body that conditions our being, our existence. Nomsa, in her corporeal form, is a zone where psychic and social forces converge. Implied in the above excerpt is the irony of the police presence which unnerves and causes tremor on the migrant in South Africa instead of giving the migrant a sense of security. The street and its openness show the vulnerability of the migrant who is exposed.

Nomsa's precarious existence in Johannesburg resonates with Giorgio Agamben's (1995) notion of 'bare life'. Her vulnerability in this sense confirms Bourdieu's (1977: 86) argument that "we are each a unique configuration of social forces". The foreign space conspicuously feels unaccommodating to Nomsa and it has social forces which she glibly describes:

> But that day, when people saw the police truck, Jo'burg became nimble-footed, it suddenly

> scrambled up…before I realise it, I'm running. I'm tripping across the pavement, and the next moment I'm skidding into a pool of water in the gutter. My dress is soaked. I scream and punch people away as I struggle to my feet and again start to run. But there is nowhere to run. It is better not to run. I must stop running. I cannot stop running (*Shadows*, 102).

The passage underlines the paradox of Nomsa's life as a transnational migrant character in Johannesburg. It is an environment in which she exists between belonging and nonbelonging (Jacobs, 2016). The magnitude of the exclusion, which Nomsa is subject to, explains a condition for a migrant in South Africa characterised by what Mpho describes elsewhere in the text as 'immobility'.

Nomsa finds the social space constrained and constraining where "a hand grabs me by my arm, twists me almost off my feet, and slams me against the wall" (102). The police represents what is understood from a psychosocial lens as the macro-level. Explaining the macro-level from a sociological vantage, Cole (2019) observes that it concerns itself with research that looks into "the political-administrative environment, including national systems, regulation and cultures" (n.p). Police raids and use of brute force towards foreign nationals like Nomsa, therefore, is attached to politics and highly structured regulations maintained in South Africa. This offers the reader an understanding of the wider society, the macro, which corresponds to the micro which considers "individual and individual-level interactions of various kinds; including people's intentions, feelings and beliefs" (Ibid: n.p). The micro level here enlightens Nomsa's interaction with the police where she is violently apprehended "and hurl[ed] [her] into the back of the police truck" (103). In this case, Nomsa's existence and difficulties in pursuit of fortune in Johannesburg is suggestive of what Phillip Chidavaenzi (2012) describes as 'the haunted trail'. Hence, she pours her heart out:

> The words slipping down my throat, drowning in my tears, and that is when I realise that the horrible sobs are my own…those policemen raped me. I had no money to pay them off and I wasn't about to be deported [back to Zimbabwe]. There is a saying around here that goes, armed with a vagina, you cannot starve (*Shadows*, 103).

The extract demonstrates the potential of the human body to affect, and in turn, be affected. This speaks to what Baruch Spinoza (1992) calls 'affect as a force'. In that regard, a "body can be affected in many ways by which its power of activity is increased or decreased" (Ibid: 103). The power of activity for Nomsa's body here is lessened and hence she falls victim to

sexual abuse by the police details. Evident are power dynamics playing out at the psychic level, where the police abuse state power to exploit the vulnerability of a migrant, undocumented and a woman. This evokes Sarah Ahmed's (2004) notion of 'affective economy', where affects circulate as money in the system. Following Ahmed (2004), Melissa Steyn (2015: 387) observes that "all such flows of affect are operative within systems of power and have social effects". Nomsa's body, therefore, is prone to abuse because of her powerlessness as an undocumented migrant character.

Nomsa's exposure to rape and her ill-preparedness to be sent back to Zimbabwe, her homeland, attests to home-phobia and internalised fear of one's home. Nomsa exists in a liminal space between a homeland – a mother without wings to cushion her own children – and a hostland where she survives on the fringes. Nomsa thrives in Johannesburg as a "dancer, sometimes an escort, maybe even a commercial sex worker" (104). The reader here learns of Nomsa's mode of being:

> I don't like my job. I don't particularly hate it. I am not here to play. I am here to make money. I don't claim to be happy here. But neither am I unhappy. I don't really mind (*Shadows*, 105).

Implied in this passage is a Nomsa who knows why she is in South Africa – to make money by any means necessary, as one might argue. For her, the end justifies the means. This is the call to existential survivability where Nomsa's manner of existing and surviving are tied to her current experiences.

Nomsa's contradictions, tensions and ambivalence with regards to her place in the hostland are brought to light in her emotional exchange with Mpho:

> Nothing is ever free here. There is no family to support you here. Nobody you can go to for some sugar, for mealie-meal, for cooking oil. In these ways I think home is better (*Shadows*, 105).

Nomsa's apparent discontentment with her daily migrant experiences and feelings of unhomeliness in Johannesburg is reminiscent of The Magistrate, a migrant character in Tendai Huchu's *The Maestro, The Magistrate & The Mathematician* (2014) who leads a miserable life with his wife and daughter in the Scottish city of Edinburgh, "a city that he dared not call home" (261). Following Bourdieu (1977), both Nomsa and The Magistrate's dispositions tell a story of troubled diasporic subjects (Jacobs, 2016). In the above extract,

Nomsa's wishful thinking and visible attachment to the homeland signals the possibilities of return migration.

4.4 Leading a life devoid of will power

The previous section focused on Nomsa's experiences as a female migrant character in Johannesburg. It established how Nomsa is situated at the centre of psychic and social forces which shape her mode of existence and survivability in the hostland. The present section focuses on the depiction of Mpho, a former migrant in "Shadows", leading a life in his homeland where he, ironically, is deprived of any sense of agency.

Tshuma (2012) foregrounds (the prospects of) return migration through Mpho's movement from Johannesburg to Zimbabwe. This brings to mind AbdouMaliq Simone's (2004) idea of "Africa [as] a space of intensified movement, of movement in a very broad sense that encompasses migration, displacement and accelerated social mobility" (Ibid: 118). Having experienced constraints as a migrant in Johannesburg, Mpho's return to his homeland is premised on arranging a "proper send-off" for his mother whose "funeral is long overdue" (108). It is a bothersome exercise which Mpho feels too weak to shoulder on his own and here, the reader is introduced to Mpho's disposition (Bourdieu, 1977):

> I feel the throb of something dreadful. I have been feeling dreadful for a long time. In these horrible spaces that we occupy, dread becomes that monster that you learn to tame and live with. It is a dreadful of hope that we carry in our hearts this year for the elections are coming up. It is a hopeless dread I carry inside of me (*Shadows*, 109).

The passage enlightens the interplay between Mpho's psychic and social aspects. It is the positioning of Mpho's body in the social context that nurtures forces which induce fear upon his mind. The phrase "horrible spaces" is testament to the socio-political aspects which, in this case, influence Mpho's movement in the world of the text. His sense of fear and insecurity cannot be understood without making sense of the society giving rise to this fearful event. In this regard, "horrible spaces" indicate a constricting home, a Zimbabwe masterminded by 'powers that be'. Following Bourdieu (2000), Mpho's description of his condition in the homeland evinces his 'affections and aversions'.

Tshuma (2012) brings to light Mpho's apprehension and arrest when he goes to fetch his mother's body at Mpilo hospital when a nurse advises him, almost dismissively, that "her body is no longer [t]here" (111). In his attempts to coerce the hospital stuff to account for the missing remains of his mother – 'the mournable body' to borrow from Dangarembga (2018)

– by causing "a dramatic scene" (111), the police is called to intervene. Mpho, unknowingly, is subject to burdensome events that lead to his chartered existence:

> There are six of them; six policemen ordered to apprehend one harmless man waiting in a hospital hallway for his mama's body. From there, things happen very quickly. They try to pin me down and handcuff me. Naturally, I resist. I begin to writhe, protest, to shout. They beat me down and drag me outside to a waiting police Santana…at that moment I know, with absolute certainty, that I am heading down a precipice from which there can be no return (*Shadows*, 112).

Lucid is the police brutality and blatant suppression maximised by what Michel Foucault (1978) describes as bio-power. In this regard, Foucault (1978) asserts that "bio-power is a technology of power […] bio-power is literally having power over bodies […] an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations" (Ibid: 80). Bio-power here explains the social aspects of Mpho's existence in Zimbabwe, his homeland. It is through the control of his body in space – the body that is 'pinned down' and 'handcuffed' by the police – that the reader fathoms the workings of bio-power.

Mpho's detention and torture at the hands of the police and his endeavour to retaliate demonstrates the "interplay of […] [his] freewill and the socially-rooted constraints" (Bourdieu, 1977) he is subject to in Zimbabwe. His arrest and detention brings into focus Foucault's (1978) notion of 'discipline and punish' where the state apparatus are portrayed by Tshuma (2012) as a disciplinary force. It is then that Mpho is "taken to the Central Police Station in town, where they take [his] fingerprints and ask [him] to make a statement" (113). In spite of Mpho's attempts to profess innocence, he is detained "[till] the morning finds [him] in the same position, squatting on [his] haunches with [his] cheeks pressed against the bars" (114). The prison cell in this case represents a constricted environment and suppressive state power, the social context giving rise to the social aspects dictating the pace of Mpho's existence and survival in the homeland. Thus, the reader is invited to discern the complementarity between the psyche and the social when Mpho finds himself in the controlling hands of "two plain clothes detectives [that] arrive to collect me from my cell…I believe the men to be from Central Intelligence, operatives sent to make me disappear" (114). Mpho's detention impacts on his psychological makeup, thus shedding light on the 'knotty intersection' (Jo Warin & Eva Gannerud, 2014) between psychic and social aspects moving and shaping his existence and survival in the homeland.

Mpho is transferred from the temporary holding cell to "a fenced facility [with] nothing written anywhere to indicate what it is" (114) where he is interrogated and tortured:

> I wonder where I am, and what is going to be done to me. They lock me in a room with no windows. One day, two days, three days, four…Your mind swells. Round and round it goes. You are hungry until you are no longer hungry. Thirsty until you are no longer thirsty…somewhere along this tormenting stretch of time, where you no longer know what a minute is, what a second is, you lose all sense of direction... Who is this person they are turning you into? (*Shadows*, 116).

Transparent here is Mpho's exposure to mental and bodily injuries. To borrow from Ranka Primorac (2010), Mpho nurses a 'troubled consciousness'. Both his body and mind are 'made' vulnerable to social forces laying guard on his fate. This psychic and physical disciplining is reminiscent of Ata Ndem, the protagonist and political prisoner in Kodwo Abaidoo's political satire, *The Mad African* (1999). In this context, Ata Ndem is dumped into a solitary cage inside The State Maximum Security Prison, a plan executed by special agents. A victim of torture, "for three years eight months and five days, the scorching Africa sun has been nothing more than a memory" (5) to Ata Ndem. As much as Mpho, Ata Ndem finds himself "at the verge of insanity" where life in the solitary cage "is steadily becoming unbearable" (3 – 4). Mpho and Ata Ndem's everyday experiences and realities demonstrate the full-blown control of the 'whole person', where the body and mind are calculatively tempered with.

Mpho goes through physical and psychological torture at the 'fenced facility', 'a disciplinary institution', as Foucault (1978) would call it, "an *anatomo-politics of the human* body… where discipline is the technology deployed to make individuals behave…" [Italics in the original] (Ibid: 80). This sheds light on Mpho's condition when he is retrieved from his enclosed and isolated room where he stays "from a few days to a week", before he is brought to face a detective who tells him that "[his] name is Sam" (116 – 7). Mpho's confused mindset attests to the workings of bio-power (Foucault, 1978) on his psyche. He is interrogated at length by Sam, the detective, in relation to treason charges emanating from the unlawful exhibition he conducted before his fruitless migration to, and return from, South Africa. When Sam puts Mpho on a vice, he cries "not crying out of remorse but out of terror… [because] the man is absolutely cuckoo in the head… [that Mpho is] scared stiff about what he may do" (119). Gestured to here is Mpho's subject to 'terror' and trauma, the products of torture and a demonstration of a life devoid of will power. In this regard, Mpho's

feeling of 'terror' stands as an intensified version of 'fear' (Tomkins, 1962/1963). Following Spinoza's (1992: 141) explication of affect (or emotion), fear "involves both the intensive force that bodies exert upon one another, increasing or decreasing their capacity to act". The torture that Sam induces on Mpho's incapacitates his body:

> He grabs my head and bangs it against the table…I am next to a bucket. I struggle as he wraps the towel around my face. But I am weak and hungry. I feel myself falling, falling backwards with my chair…icy water is being poured over the towel around my face. I begin to scream. My screams drown in the water soaking through the towel, into my mouth, into my nose (*Shadows*, 122).

Translucent is the control of the body in space. Just like the way Mpho is strangled and dumped into the street by revellers being entertained by Nomsa at Lollipop Lounge in Johannesburg, Mpho's body is once again exposed to social forces in Bulawayo. This resonates with Raewyn Connell and James Schmidt's (2005: 851) argument that "bodies are involved more actively, more intimately and more intricately in social processes". Mpho navigates the social world captured by Tshuma (2012) as a passive former migrant character who exists and survives with no agency in his homeland.

4.5 Constrained figures away from home

The previous section focused on Mpho's condition of existence and survivability as a former migrant character in Zimbabwe. The section brought to light how Mpho is portrayed by Tshuma (2012) leading a life without free will where psychic and social aspects complementarily shape his daily experiences and realities. The present section concentrates on migrant characters in *Shadows* as constrained figures in Johannesburg.

Tshuma (2012) depicts the beinghood of the nameless female protagonist-narrator in "You in Paradise" being informed by psychic and social aspects. Her daily existence and fashion of surviving is punctuated with tribulations. It is because of the nameless narrator's precarious lifestyle in the homeland, where "it was just bad, bad in Zimbabwe" (135) with civil servants "earn[ing] a salary that is enough to buy only two kilograms of chicken one month" (138), that compels her to border jump into South Africa. The unaccommodating foreign environment that the nameless narrator finds herself in brings her to age. She is inculcated by Aunt Ntombi on how to negotiate the spaces of Johannesburg where the police are always on the lookout for undocumented migrants: "Never look away…never look away, or else they'll know you're not one of them" (134). To exist and survive as a migrant character in South

Africa is a soft skill that the nameless narrator has to acquire. She is compelled to have knowledge of what Bourdieu (1977) describes as 'rules of the game' to thrive in a hostile Johannesburg. Identity theft, an idea I critically reflects on in chapter 3 of this research, appears to be a viable tool of survival worth adopting when the nameless narrator is confronted by the police demanding to see her identity document. Here, she plainly identifies her place of origin as "KwaZulu-Natal" with an "inwardly reprimanding […] voice for its persistent tremor" (134). One might argue that the reader is drawn towards 'affect as a force' (Spinoza, 1992) where the body of the nameless narrator reacts to the social space she finds herself in. 'Tremor' here explains how her body is affected by the social forces. This corresponds to Bourdieu's (1977) idea that "each social field of practice (including society as a whole) can be understood as a competitive game of field of struggles in which social agents strategically improvise their quest to maximise their positions" (Ibid: cited in Maton, 2008: 60). The nameless narrator, in this case, is a social agent battling to create a space in which to exist and survive in a controlled social world captured by Tshuma (2012).

Aunt Ntombi, a close relative to the nameless narrator, exists in the fringes of Johannesburg where she tries to make ends meet as an irregular migrant character. Much like the nameless narrator, Aunt Ntombi is also pushed by living constraints at home and dreams of better living conditions elsewhere. She desires to exist and survive against all odds in Johannesburg where social forces lay guard on her. Hence, through the nameless narrator, the reader learns of Aunt Ntombi's predicament at the hands of the police:

> You will never forget how Aunt Ntombi calmly pulled her panties and lay on the floor. As if this were an everyday routine. *Because I have nothing*!, she would later shout back as you screamed at her, hysterical. *I have nothing else to give, you hear! And anyway it was all your fault, all your fault, couldn't even tell a simple lie with a straight face* [Italics in the original] (*Shadows,* 134 – 5).

The snippet expresses a constricting space where Aunt Ntombi and the nameless narrator exist and survive, punctuated by what William Blake (1757 – 1827) describes in his poem "London" as 'marks of weakness'. Shame and disgust, as negative affects (Tomkins, 1962/1963), describe Aunt Ntombi's condition in this scenario. Tshuma's (2012) portrayal of Johannesburg corresponds to William Blake's (1757 – 1827) representation of the London society as a space where people lead 'chartered lives' grounded in 'mind-forged manacles'.

It is in this drive that Tshuma (2012) gestures towards the psychic aspects of Aunt Ntombi's existence and mode of surviving in Johannesburg. The text demonstrates, through the nameless narrator who refers to herself in the second person narrative voice, the interplay between the psychic and social aspects:

> Yes, you wanted to forget how they straddled her right there, the policemen, and forced you to watch…[as Aunt Ntombi] was panting like a bitch in heat in the back of the police truck. There was something in her eyes, something that made you look away. It was defiant pain, glinting dagger-like in the brown of her eyes… (*Shadows,* 135).

The extract here brings to light Aunt Ntombi's subjective feelings in response to an external stimulus (Bourdieu, 1977). This speaks to Margaret Wetherell's (2012) notion of affective practice where she explains that "affect is embodied, situated and operates psychologically" (Ibid: 110). It is because of her body's exposure to police brutality and sexual harassment, that the reader is oriented towards Aunt Ntombi's internal state of being. This exposition shows how Aunt Ntombi's body does not belong to the space she finds herself in. What stands out to a discerning reader is Aunt Ntombi's vulnerable existence and survival in the foreign space which is conditioned by both psychic and social aspects that oppress migrant characters.

The vulnerability and victimisation that the nameless narrator and Aunt Ntombi go through in Johannesburg speaks to what Wetherell (2012) explains as "the passing of affect from one body to another, forming what can be seen like pulses of energetic relation" (Ibid: 142). Hence, the nameless narrator laments:

> And later, as you sat curled in her room, angry tears streaming down your cheeks, she [Aunt Ntombi] hugged you and said she was sorry, she was sorry, just forget [it] now (*Shadows*, 135).

The passage shows the human body's proneness to affect and be affected, an intensive force following Spinoza (1992), which bodies exert upon one another. The nameless narrator and Aunt Ntombi are trying to survive under pitiful and unbearable conditions where support for each other is indispensable. Despite getting out of herself and "shout[ing] back" at the nameless narrator who "screamed at her" (134) under the forceful hands of the police, Aunt Ntombi remains a parental figure to the nameless narrator. It is a place where existence and survival are negotiated, a place where migrant characters keep their hard-earned proceeds "between watermelon breasts and secret pockets sewn into underwear" (134). This evokes

Sue Nyathi's *The Gold Diggers* (2018) in which characters migrate from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg where they survive between having little and nothing. Gold digging, thus, is understood as a metaphor for learning to live with less while battling to make room for more. The nameless narrator and Aunt Ntombi's endeavour to exist in a highly exclusionary foreign space demonstrates how constricted their lives away from home are.

For the nameless narrator, Johannesburg is a rigid space where she experiences entangled challenges stemming from her positionality as a migrant, woman and employee. The spate of violence perpetrated against foreign nationals reorders the furniture in the nameless narrator's psyche. It is a "terrifying time" (139) where her sense of being and mode of survival are shaken. It is a period when xenophobic violence is reigning supreme that she spends "a whole month locked up in Aunt Ntombi's room peeping through tightlydrawn curtains at the pandemonium outside and the screaming placards" (139 – 40). Tshuma (2012) brings to the fore a dismissive socio-political environment which the nameless narrator finds incontestable:

> *Zimbagwenz Go Bac 2 Yo Mugabe! Nigerians Go Bac 2 Yo Umaru! Don't Want You Here! Thivz! Stealing Our Woman, Our Job, Our Money!* [Italics in the original] (*Shadows*, 140).

Luminous is a disturbing and distress-inducing call and wave of xenophobia conditioning the nameless narrator's sense of self in the foreign space. This brings to mind Eugene Campbell and Jonathan Crush's (2015: 159) proposition that "xenophobia is becoming an increasingly common response to migration within Global South, often taking the form of collective violence against migrants and refugees". The idea of mass action here explains the social aspects – the macro level, the broader society – informing the existence and way of survival for the nameless narrator. Her victimhood to 'terror' sheds light on how the social bears on the psyche. The nameless narrator's positionality here is reminiscent of Qinisela's condition in Mlalazi's *The Border Jumper* (2019) when he is intercepted by two cops after robbing an old white women at OK supermarket before walking away with "over ten thousand rand" (110). A highly unsettled figure after narrowly escaping the "police scare", Qinisela is forced into self-detention when he stays in his "Savoy hotel room for six full days" (128). This explains an unsettling social space moving and shaping the movement of Qinisela as a migrant character in South Africa, a condition akin to the nameless narrator and Aunt Ntombi.

Tshuma (2012) further shows the relationality of the psychic and social aspects in shaping the existence and survivability of the nameless female protagonist-narrator as a woman and an employee in Johannesburg. The text brings to the reader's attention her gendered experiences where she has less control of her fate at the hands of men. The nameless narrator is involved in an intimate relationship with her unnamed Greek manager at Wimpy where she is employed on a part-time basis to clean dishes when she is "not plaiting people's hair on the corner of Bree and Small Street" (139). It is an environment which calls for the nameless narrator's flexibility to survive as a woman whose vulnerability to psychic and social forces is unimpeachably high:

> There are things concerning your manager that you do not want to think about, that you would prefer to remain locked in that part of your mind where the things you want to forget are imprisoned. But these things are like fluid particles, sometimes they flow through the bars of your subconscious and flood to the forefront of your thoughts (*Shadows*, 140).

Underscored is the manner in which the nameless narrator's daily experiences and realities are characterised by what Bourdieu (1977) explains as the nexus between the social and the individual where "we are each a unique configuration of social forces […] these forces are social, so that even when we are being individual and 'different' we do so in socially regular ways" (Ibid: cited in Maton, 2008: 53).

The extract above brings into discussion the nameless narrator's gendered mode of existing and surviving as a migrant character when she is forced by the Greek manager to abort a foetus through a Nigerian doctor against her will. The nameless narrator painfully reflects on her disturbing migratory experiences when she falls victim to sexual molestation at the hands of Obi, a Nigerian migrant. It is as a result of Obi's sexual advances whose "fingers are moving up [her] skirt and slipping through [her] underwear" (139) that the nameless narrator is brought down the memory lane:

> He (Obi) reminds you of that other Nigerian…The one your manager hauled you towards as you screamed that you weren't going anywhere…The one who made you lie down and spread your legs so he could use his gloved finger to push the pill inside of you…And afterwards, as you clung to the bars on the suffocating little box your Nigerian landlord calls a balcony, felt the first trickles of the blood

> soaking into your underwear, you cried, and you laughed, though why you were laughing, you still don't know (*Shadows*, 140).

Limpid in the passage is the interplay between the nameless narrator's body and mind, a gesture to the physical embodiment and what the nameless narrator is telling herself in her head. She is powerless in the face of men who generate what Elizabeth Spelman (1997) describes as 'fruits of sorrow'. It is the nameless narrator's exposure to the mauling foreign space that shapes her psychic aspects ironically at the hands of other foreigners:

> And later, as you walked past the grimy poster littering the city centre, saying that Lizzie did abortions but Ujo was a trained doctor and did them at a cheaper price, you were tempted to tear down every one of them, until there was no more Lizzie no more Doctor Ujo. It had been for the best, you would later tell yourself over and over (*Shadows*, 141 – 42).

Understandably, there is a sense of fury emanating from the nameless narrator's lack of agency, which elsewhere, Iris Marion Young (1991) describes as a 'face' of oppression. The nameless narrator is portrayed as a defeated female migrant character whose "body is exposed and endangered in the world, faced with the risk of emotion, lesion… [and] suffering" (Bourdieu, 2000: 141). The nameless narrator and Aunty Ntombi's experiences in Johannesburg are suggestive of troubled diasporic subjects (Jacobs, 2016).

4.6 Contending with psychic and social detriment

The previous section focused on migrant characters' portrayal in *Shadows* as individuals leading constrained migrant lives in Johannesburg. It evinced that migrant characters stand as victims to psychic and social aspects which shape their everyday experiences in the hostland. The present section focuses on how the psyche and the social generate sustained harm in the face of migration.

Noma, in the story "Doctor S" in Tshuma's *Shadows* (2012), is depicted as a female Actuarial Science student at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. She is a distressed figure whose negotiation of the foreign space tells the story of psychosocial harm. Noma finds the land beyond borders quite unaccommodating because "Wits University, and Johannesburg generally… [are] distinctly depersonalising" (154). A victim of episodes which "had begun when she was sixteen" (156), Noma is diagnosed with a disease disclosed to her

by Doctor S at Brenthurst Clinic in Parktown as "conversion disorder" (162). The reader is driven towards the psychic aspects of Noma's daily existence and survivability as a migrant character. Hence, Doctor S explains to Noma that:

> Conversion disorder…is when the mind undergoes prolonged stress, but you don't deal with it, so your body decides to deal with it itself. In effect, it is psychological stresses that manifest themselves physically (*Shadows*, 162).

It can be argued that the text demonstrates the psychosocial injuries conditioning Noma's experiences as a migrant character in South Africa. Noma is astounded by Doctor S's substantiation of conversion disorder, the disease she is suffering from, which apparently has socio-economic and political causation. Thus, Doctor S illustrates:

> But you need to be honest with your emotions, and try not to be strong for the world. You have gone through such traumatic experiences in your country, such suffering, and it is alarming to me how you speak about it so matter-of-factly…you strike me as a particularly strong young lady. But you need to look after yourself. Be honest with your feelings. The key is not to suppress, but to express (*Shadows*, 163).

The passage here substantiates my thesis in chapter 2 of this study which proposes the conceptualisation of migration as a web of intersecting forces. Doctor S attributes Noma's psychic condition to her experiences back in Zimbabwe before migrating to South Africa. It is because of the 'constraints at home' which Noma faces whereupon "things got a bit hard and [her] mum had to leave her teaching job…when things got hard in Zim, and so she did cross-border trading sometimes...sometimes [they] went together…it was rough, sleeping in the bus and everything with a dozen other people" (161). Communicated here are the social aspects with a direct bearing on Noma's psyche. 'Conversion disorder' here explains the double-displacement of Zimbabwean migrant characters when they are trapped between a debilitating homeland and an unwelcoming hostland (Jacobs, 2016). Thus, the existence and survivability of a Zimbabwean migrant character remains in the balance wherever they are. This line of reasoning is exemplified by Darling in Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* (2013), the nameless male protagonist-narrator in Chikwava's *Harare North* (2009) and The Magistrate in Huchu's *The Maestro, The Magistrate & The Mathematician* (2014). These characters share with Noma the same feelings of unhomeliness in the foreign spaces.

Noma is involved in a (lopsided) relationship with a Zimbabwean businessman "who made frequent trips to Johannesburg" (167). As a consequence of this sexual relationship, Noma has "broken down and cried" after discovering that her intimate partner "was a married man" (176). Like the nameless narrator in Tshuma's (2012) short story "You in Paradise" analysed above who is forced into abortion by her Greek employer-cum-lover, Noma too, has an abortion. Noma describes the abortion as "an induced miscarriage…a clean procedure at a private clinic in Sandton" after "they had discussed it with the father of the baby" (167). However, the experience of abortion impacts negatively upon her well-being:

> [The businessman] had refused to hold her hand as the doctor inserted a tube that made a swooshing sound…as it sucked out the contents…the procedure was uncomfortable but not painful…Noma…[had] wished her married businessman boyfriend was there to give her hand a squeeze. *She was desperate for a familiar face*. *He'd simply dropped her off and picked her up afterwards* as she sat with her legs pressed together in the waiting room … *trying not to cry* [emphasis added] (*Shadows*, 168).

Apparently, Noma is exposed to an unfriendly and unsupportive social world where, as a woman, she is prone to psychic and social forces that isolate her. Away from home and already feeling unhomely in a foreign space, Noma" had cried all the way home – not for the abortion, but for the abandonment she felt…she did not see the businessman again" (169). Evidently, Noma is portrayed by Tshuma (2012) as a migrant character contending with both psychic and social harm informing how she exists and survives in Johannesburg. The narrative and thematic trope of abortion – forced and voluntary – speaks to migration as uprootment from home. The material body is home to the foetus. Aborting is synonymous with denying the would-be child a home, and this speaks to the manner in which migrant characters are forced to leave the homeland to seek fortunes beyond borders.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that psychic and social aspects complement each other in shaping migrant characters' mode of existence and survivability in local and foreign spaces captured by the two texts. It has been argued that the migrant 'body' is an intersection of psychological and social forces which inhibit characters' sustained efforts to exist and survive in and beyond Zimbabwe. It was established that migrant characters lead lives without the will power to shape their own destiny in the homeland. Migrant characters, it has been

demonstrated, also lead lives in the hostland manifesting both psychic and social harm. The chapter, therefore, concludes that by focusing on the interplay between the psyche and the social aspects, we have a holistic understanding of how characters exist and survive in the spaces captured in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* as we are taken into the psyche of individuals in different social contexts that militate against their background by making victims of them.

Chapter Five: Summary of Findings and Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

The critical motivation underlying this research project was to draw theoretical attention to the corroborative and inseparable notions of existence and survivability in the face of Zimbabwean migration into South Africa as portrayed in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*. The study covered two literary works published by Zimbabwean writers in the post-2000 period. Critical analysis of the texts was done through the prism of typified migrant experiences in Zimbabwe, South Africa and on the margins of both and on the borderlines, between societies and countries. The argument took on three related aspects. First, it sought

to conceptualise transborder migration as a web of intersecting forces guided by insights from the theory of intersectionality and the concept of oppression. Second, the study focused on migrant or transnational identities as portrayed by the texts, with a focus on intersectionality theory and the concept of (multiple) identity (ies) as an eclectic mode of understanding identity in this socio-political/social-geographical context. Third, the study exposed the relationality of psychic and social aspects in migrant lives both in Zimbabwe and South Africa, informed by insights from the concept of habitus.

Through critical engagement with the selected texts, the study suggests a re-look into literary representation of existence and survivability within Zimbabwean migration into South Africa. Chapter two, for example, opens with a discussion of transborder migration in order to draw attention to the conceptualisation of Zimbabwean out-migration as a conglomeration of forces. Chapter three establishes the manner in which the heterogeneous transnational identities and subjectivities move and shape characters' trends of existing and surviving in the homeland and hostland. Chapter four draws attention to the portrayal of psychic and social aspects as part and parcel of migrant lives in and beyond Zimbabwe. Finally, the discussion on existence and survivability is carried out in the context of transnational migration in the postmodern world. In line with this focus, it has been proposed that Zimbabwean migration into South Africa is informed by systems of domination impacting on migrant lives at home and beyond borders.

In the first chapter of this study, a review of expansive existing (qualitative and quantitative) literature on transborder migration showed that there has not been much focus on how migrant(s) (characters) exist and survive both in the home countries and host countries. It is this less attention to the transnational condition on both ends coupled with gender-specific studies on transnational migration that motivated the need for such a study.

An important point raised in chapter two is that Zimbabwe, as home to migrant characters in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*, has its own forces emanating from socio-economic downturn, government's brutality and violence perpetrated against poverty-stricken citizens. It has been shown how such forces constrain (would-be migrant) characters' lives and drive them away from the homeland. A close reading of the two texts evinced how the movement of characters from Zimbabwe to the hostland is laced with challenges, where documented migrant characters are detained at the national border awaiting verification of their travelling documents by immigration officers; while undocumented migrant characters who make it

through the Limpopo River fall victims to reptilian and human crocodiles. The challenges that characters face on the borderlines foretell the struggles they later encounter in Johannesburg. Poverty, as has been shown, unabatedly reigns supreme in migrant lives as they realise that Johannesburg is not the golden archipelago, a place where their livelihoods are bettered. Johannesburg, it is suggested, is characterised by challenges that intersect with the detriment that migrant characters, as 'Zimbabwe's forgotten children' (True Vision, 2017), face at home and during their movement to South Africa. In that regard, *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper* serve the reader with an understanding of Zimbabwean migration into South Africa as a web of intersecting forces.

It is because of migrant characters' exposure to spaces punctuated with perceived threats to their modes of being that they adopt different identities and subjectivities. Chapter three examines how transnational identities and subjectivies inform migrant characters' existence and survivability both in the homeland and hostland. It has been posited that characters assume a multiplicity of identities and subjectivities as they move through different local and foreign spaces. The analysis of *The Border Jumper* indicates that characters like Qinisela, Vusa and Disaster are constantly engaged and engaging with different identities and subjectivities as they navigate different spaces in Zimbabwe and South Africa. In *Shadows*, it is highlighted that Mpho is engaged in an attempt to redefine his identity and subjectivity when he finds himself in unwelcoming and menacing spaces of Johannesburg. Identities of migrant characters in the two texts are linked to social influences; whilst subjectivities are linked to the cognitive aspects where characters are conscious to how they inhabit spaces inherent in the selected texts.

Chapter four examines how the existence and survivability of migrant characters both in local and foreign spaces is conditioned by the interplay between psychic and social aspects. The chapter demonstrates that psychic and social aspects complement each other in shaping migrant characters' modes of existence and survivability in Zimbabwe and South Africa. It is underscored that the migrant 'body' stands at the centre of psychological and social forces that inhibit characters' sustained efforts to exist and survive in and beyond Zimbabwe. On one end, migrant characters lead lives without the will power to shape their own destiny in the homeland and on the other, they lead lives in the hostland manifesting both psychic and social harm. It is, therefore, through paying attention to the interplay between the psyche and the social that the reader makes sense of characters existence and survivability in the spaces captured in by Tshuma (2012) and Mlalazi (2019).

In sum**,** the research explored migrant characters' existence and survivability in Zimbabwe and beyond borders in *Shadows* and *The Border Jumper*. It is the finding of this study that due to the characteristic feature of Zimbabwean migration into South Africa as a web of intersecting forces (chapter two), migrant characters are moved and engaged by multifarious identities and subjectivities (chapter three), where they encounter psychic and social aspects dictating the particularities of their modes of existing and surviving in local and foreign spaces (chapter four). Writing this research report at a critical moment when the clarion call from youthful South Africans is for foreigners to leave South Africa to and for South Africans, one can only speculate that maybe, we are beginning to see the emergence of new forms of nationalisms similar to Donald Trump's "America and Americans first". Nevertheless, this signals towards an area for further research.

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